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Events of the Week.

THERE has been a late but, we think, a general, uprising of British opinion against the atrocities in Ireland. With the Liberal leaders this has taken the form of an attempt to construct a new Irish Constitution. This is good; but we already see the nimble Mr. George running from the coming storm over Irish administration to the shelter of a debate on schemes of Irish government. The *immediate* task of the Opposition is to demand investigation into the Policy of Terror, and if necessary to take part in a strong Committee of Inquiry and Observation, to sit in Ireland, and tell the Commons and the people the truth. That is what the Quakers, who work while Bishops pray, have already done, with excellent effect. This method, joined to the investigations of the "Daily News," has already given the lie to Sir Hamar Greenwood's plea of "exaggeration" and of an uncalculated outburst of revenge. In Roscommon, for example, he showed that the police engaged in the methodical burning of selected farmsteads and stacks of hay, taking a great tract of country as their "objective."

THE most important and courageous Liberal utterance has been that of Mr. Asquith, who, professing no alarm at "the spectre of an Irish Republic," proposed, in the "Times," to omit Lord Grey's probationary period, and to give Ireland at once the full *status* of a Dominion, including fiscal independence and the right of local defence. British control would be exercised, as with the other Dominions, through foreign policy and the Navy's right of entry to Irish ports—in itself an ample guarantee of military security. We should add to this an offer of the Prince of Wales as Regent, or, if necessary, as Sovereign of the reconstituted Irish Nation. As to minorities, Mr. Asquith would provide for the "temporary" abstention of "a genuine local minority," *i.e.*, of an Orange *enclave*, whose traditional loyalty, however, would naturally be attracted to an English Prince. The Prime Minister's mind, filtered through Mr. Harold Spender's porous intelligence, has declined the Dominion solution in advance. Naturally. Sir Edward Carson will not let him accept it. Mr. George's most engaging point

was that but for the Coalition Ireland might have had a worse policy than the one the Government has inflicted on her. What—worse than Balbriggan?

OUR Irish correspondent writes:—

"There is no evidence here that the Government's carefully modulated deprecation of these so-called 'reprisals' is anything but a pious opinion. Sir Hamar Greenwood's address to the R.I.C., far from being a condemnation of these outrages, was a propagandist defence. The attacks on Achenry, Tubbercurry, Frenchpark, and Cork, all of which have occurred since the Cabinet meeting, show that there is no serious purpose of departing from the settled plan. Mr. Hugh Martin, in the "Daily News," has fairly overthrown Sir Nevil Macready's official account of the burning of Newport creamery. This, no doubt, was one of the cases of gross exaggeration. So also, no doubt, are the murders of Lawless, Quester, and the Lynches. The plain fact is that these incidents are, properly speaking, not in the nature of reprisals at all—in the sense of spontaneous, more or less uncontrollable, outbursts on the part of goaded and outraged men. It is beyond question that the men who burned and murdered in Balbriggan were under the complete control of their officers, and worked according to plan. These events are punitive expeditions, and form part of a general frontal attack on Sinn Fein, or rather upon Ireland, in which every weapon, legitimate and illegitimate, is employed. They are part of the military plan which, it is boasted, will eradicate Sinn Fein within the next two months. It is because this is so that protests will be in vain. The military party have got their free hand."

TROTSKY has again been wounded, the workers of Petrograd have again risen from their graves to be again mown down by the machine-guns of Jewish Communists, while Mr. Wells is calmly making a speech to Maxim Gorky on the Petrograd railway station; the peasants of Samara are again in revolt; and the Soviet Government is once more tottering to its repeated fall. In other words, there is a danger that the British Government may sign a trade agreement with the Soviet Government, and a possibility that the Poles will desert General Wrangel and make peace with Russia. The symptoms of the collapse of Bolshevism are now so well known and are so invariably followed by a Bolshevik victory over the Koltchaks, Denikins, Judeniches, Poles, or Wrangels, that even the newspapers which publish the news do so with some shame-facedness. The truth seems to be that Mr. George is now making another tack towards trade with Russia, and the draft agreement with regard to Russian trade is about to be laid before the Cabinet. Mr. Churchill and the anti-Russians are beginning at once to "mobilize public opinion" against tainted gold and shaking hands with murder, and a condition precedent to such mobilization is that Bolshevism should be tottering to its fall.

THAT the Bolshevik Government and still more the urban population of Russia should still survive the persecution of the civilized States of Western Europe is indeed remarkable, and no sane man would prophesy as to what will happen in Moscow and Petrograd if this persecution continues through another winter. But the callousness of Mr. Churchill and his friends is almost inconceivable. The "Morning Post," for instance, uses the news of the imminent "doom of the Bolshevik *régime*" as an argument for refusing to trade with Russia. It points

out that already "the sole interest of the Russian people of the towns is to obtain sufficient food to prolong from day to day their miserable existence," and it looks forward to a winter famine in Russia almost as intensive as that of 1891. And then it goes on to point out that if only we don't make an agreement with Russia and the attacks go on, General Wrangel may, during the winter, "be able to cut off from the north the grain of the Kuban, the coal of the Donetz basin, and the oil of Baku." To this exhibition of Western civilization and democracy we can fittingly apply the words which the "Morning Post" uses in a different connection: "What must the wretched people of Petrograd think of such humbug, if they are capable of thinking at all?"

THERE can be no doubt that if Mr. George stood firm against Mr. Churchill with regard to the immediate opening of trade, he would have overwhelming support for his policy in the country. The support would come not only from the Left and from Labor, but also from manufacturers. With trade depression increasing, industrialists are beginning to ask for some solid reasons why we should continue to keep the whole of Eastern Europe in a state of anarchy, and deliberately cut ourselves off from the markets there. And they are no longer satisfied with the reasons given by the handful of militarists, *émigrés*, financiers, and journalists who stand behind this policy. The arguments of Mr. Churchill and his friends have, in fact, worn so thin lately that no business man can be deceived by them. Their trump card remains the "stolen gold" and the repudiation of the debts of the former Russian Government. But their case for no relations and no trade with Russia until the Government debts are recognized, implies that no Government has ever previously repudiated, or that, if it has, the whole of the civilized world has refused to have any relations with it or to trade with its nationals. That may be good enough for the readers of the "Morning Post." But the Lancashire exporter, who knows something about the world of international trade and finance, requires something a little less romantic.

THE next week will be a crucial one as regards the fate of Russia, Eastern Europe, and Poland. The questions of trade with Russia, of the peace negotiations at Riga, and of Wrangel in the Crimea, are inextricably connected. But the whole situation is slowly coming to a head. If Mr. George's attitude on the trade question is something more than a temporary tack, there may be truth in the report that the British Government has officially advised Poland to make peace. But if Poland makes peace, or even a real armistice, and trade between Britain and Russia is resumed, that means the end of Wrangel. Hence the pressure from Wrangel's envoys, and from certain French quarters, to stiffen the backs of the Poles at Riga. The Russian Government has shown during the past week that it is prepared to make peace, or an armistice, with Poland practically on Poland's terms. That would mean that the armistice line, and, therefore, almost certainly the frontier, would be what is called the Baranowiche line, which is far to the east of the Curzon line, and would concede to Poland vast territories to which she has no shadow of claim. The contradictory messages, which are continually issuing from Riga and Warsaw, indicate the fluctuating struggle which is proceeding there, a struggle not so much between the Russian and Polish Governments and delegations, as between the Polish factions which desire peace and the Polish factions which wish, under French direction, to support Wrangel. The struggle has reached

a point at which a decision one way or the other is imminent, but it is impossible to predict the result. On Monday, for instance, the peace party was winning, and the signing of an armistice in a few days was said to be certain; on Tuesday practically all chance of an armistice or peace was said to have vanished; and, as we write, it is reported that M. Dembski and M. Joffe have agreed to sign an armistice on Friday, October 8th.

INFORMATION from all the industrial centres confirms the belief that unemployment during the winter will be very serious, while under-employment in the shape of short time will be widespread in the textile and engineering trades. At present the worst conditions seem to exist in the motor-car trade. Manufacturers are loth to believe that the demand for cars at high prices is not inexhaustible. They laid their plans after the armistice on the assumption that a boom would last for years, and that intensive production, unrelated to the problems of consumption and the general conditions in Europe, would alone meet the difficulties of reconstruction. The "Soviet" agitation in Coventry has not yet obtained the support of more than a few hundred out of the five thousand unemployed, but it has clearly shown the danger of the spread of revolutionary feeling among men who are threatened with starvation. The Coventry movement has derived its impetus chiefly from the fact that no productive relief work is available, and this alone should warn the Government and local authorities to act quickly. Even the meagre benefit provided for by the Unemployment Insurance Act will not be available in time to meet this crisis. Dock workers, who could not benefit from the Act in any case, owing to their conditions of employment, are suffering bitter privation. The Government has a golden chance of helping a practical and progressive reform by supporting in principle (it needs some modification in detail) the maintenance scheme of the Dockers' Union.

THE decision of the miners' delegate conference to take a second ballot on the coalowners' revised datum line offer was arrived at because neither the Federation executive nor the conference could agree. The divisions of opinion within these two bodies have been reflected in the conflicting advice given to the men in the coalfields. The result is that the situation is again obscure, and with all the dangers of obscurity. No reliable information is available to show what the mass of the miners are thinking individually, but the fact that a majority of the committees of the coalfield associations have recommended rejection of the datum line scheme is bound to influence the vote. Opinion in Yorkshire, which was strongly against a strike to enforce the original demand, is said to be equally strong against any scheme to base wages on output. A majority vote against the owners' offer is therefore probable. Much discussion has taken place on the question whether a majority less than two-thirds for rejection would justify a strike, but the present vote is one merely for or against the acceptance of a particular offer. If it is rejected a decision on the next step will rest with the delegates' conference on Thursday. The expectation is that if the owners' offer is rejected pressure will be put on it by the Midland districts, by Cleveland, and possibly by Yorkshire, to accept the alternative solution of a court of inquiry, although a further ballot on this question would be necessary. Notwithstanding the resistance of South Wales, it is manifest that, even if the owners' offer were not accepted because of the ingrained suspicion of its principle, there would be no solid feeling behind the policy of a strike. And Mr. Smillie is clearly working hard to stop it.

WE can only express in brief our astonishment that at such an hour in the history of British India such a document as the Report of the Esher Committee on the organization of the Indian Army should have been written and seen the light. The Committee consists of two of the most dangerous civilians in politics or the services—Lord Esher and Sir Michael O'Dwyer—and of a majority of military men. These gentlemen propose, in effect, to divert the control of the Indian Army from India to Whitehall, and its central function from the defence of India to the prosecution of Imperial war in the Middle East. We are glad to hear that the Government have not committed themselves to this proposal. We should have been more satisfied if they had politely handed back the draft of the Committee's report, with the suggestion that it should be reconsidered in a Rest Cure Establishment.

* * *

THE International Free Trade Conference this week performed a considerable feat, in these days of passport and other barriers, in bringing to London the representatives of fourteen nations, including the late enemy States and the new Balkan countries. The need and the opportunity of such a gathering are equally urgent. On the one hand, the war set up new trade restrictions, many of which are still in active operation, while the Treaties of Versailles have broken up old Free Trade areas in the Central Powers. The war had not gone on long before Protectionists in this country frightened timid Liberals into what they hoped to make a lasting system of restrictive and discriminative tariffs, with imperialism, national defence, and anti-dumping as its main supports. Against this commercial separatism the needs of a broken, starving Europe are now visibly revolting. The new barriers, set up by the Bad Peace, are literally strangling the recovery of Central and Eastern Europe. Protectionism is compatible neither with peace, nor with retrenchment, nor with reform.

* * *

THE papers and discussions of the Conference were mainly directed to the demand for free importation as a prime condition for the recovery of the depleted industries of Europe and her broken finance. In a remarkable paper, Sir George Paish pointed the true relations between finance and trade, showing how all European nations were being reduced to economic impotence and unemployment by financial instability, itself closely linked with the commercial obstructions. Protectionist fallacies are largely responsible for the shrinkage of the American export trade. And this shrinkage, in its turn, is closing down our factories, and piling up unsaleable goods overseas, for lack of which whole populations in Europe are perishing. Some of these salutary truths are beginning to find entrance into high quarters, if we may judge by the strong Free Trade declaration just uttered by the Economic Council at Brussels. But Governments are never to be trusted, unless strong vigilance committees exist to keep them in the paths of probity. Therefore, we welcome what we understand is to be the main issue of this Conference, *viz.*, the establishment of a World Free Trade League, in which the national groups and societies may work together and promote the common cause of peace and free commerce.

* * *

M. AUGUSTE GAUVAIN has written in the "Journal des Débats" a detailed criticism of the article which appeared in our issue of September 18th, "France and Ourselves." M. Gauvain takes what is really a moderate French view on foreign policy, but what he says only

confirms us in our belief as to the gulf between French and British views, and as to the failure of French statesmen and publicists to face the fact of public opinion in this country. The point which we made in our previous article was that, while Mr. Lloyd George, by signing the Treaty of Versailles, had virtually pledged this country to an eternal alliance with France for the subjection of Germany, he now could not "deliver the goods," because the people of this country would refuse to supply the military force which the execution of the Treaty and an enforcement of the military and economic subjection of Germany will continually demand.

* * *

M. GAUVAIN makes two main points in reply. THE NATION, he says, does not represent British opinion. But the opinion was not "ours" in the sense in which he takes it; we were not arguing at the moment against the execution of the Treaty, but stating a fact with regard to the opinion of the man in the street in this country. We asserted, and still assert, that if M. Millerand or M. Leygues attempts to enforce, say, the vindictive economic clauses of the Treaty and apply the military sanctions, and if that leads to a situation in which France has to call upon us for military assistance, the vast majority of people here would refuse military service for such an object. If M. Gauvain doubts our statement, let him come over to England and engage in casual conversation with a few men in the third class railway carriages of, say, London or Manchester. That is the great fact of public opinion to which we referred in our article, and which in our view French statesmen and writers will not face. It may or may not be a regrettable fact, but surely it is one, which, if true, French statesmen should take into consideration in forming their policy. Suppose France continues her policy of keeping Germany in economic subjection and attacking Russia. She will drive Germany into the arms of Russia. Then, let us say, she occupies the Ruhr in order to enforce the Treaty. Six months later she might well find herself involved in a new European war in which she would have as opponents both Germany and Russia. Who would fight at her side? Belgium and Poland probably, and possibly Hungary. She would get no help from Italy, and, in our opinion, people in Great Britain would be almost solidly opposed to taking any part in such a war.

* * *

EVENTS have rapidly confirmed the prophecy which we made in a recent article that Lenin's policy would lead to a serious split in the international Labor movement. The Orleans Congress of the French C.G.T. resolved itself, last week, into a pitched battle between Right and Left, Geneva and Moscow, Social Democracy and Communism. The result was a signal victory for M. Jouhaux and Social Democracy. The defeat of the extreme Left in France was certain, because French Labor has not forgotten or forgiven them their responsibility for the disastrous railway strike. The vote indicated that so far as French Trade Unionism is concerned, it will have nothing to do with Communism and the Third International, but stands by its mild policy of constitutional Socialism and its demand for nationalization. Matters, however, can hardly rest where they are, for the extreme Left is not satisfied, and will return to the charge, while the breach will certainly reappear in the Parliamentary Socialist Party. The same thing has happened in the German and Italian Parties. The Italian Party last week, after a strenuous debate, maintained its decision to adhere to the Moscow International, and the vote has already been followed by important resignations, and must lead to a split in the Party.

Politics and Affairs.

A PROPOSAL OF IRISH SETTLEMENT.

THE Liberal leaders have at last broken their silence on Ireland. Their reprobation of what British rule has recently been: there is either wanting altogether, or falls short of its deserts; but their proposals to end it need to be carefully examined. Lord Grey's proposition seems to us quite inadequate. Ireland is a Nation, and she demands her national rights on the terms we have laid down as the groundwork of British policy in Europe. It is no satisfaction of that demand to offer her, in the guise of a Dominion settlement, a continued dependence on the military and political system endeared to her by the campaign of the Black-and-Tans. Mr. Asquith goes a long step farther. His tender is virtually that of a Free State. Ireland is to become the Fifth Dominion of the Empire, and to accept only as much British control as the modern Dominion acknowledges, which is moral rather than material, and functions mainly in the domain of Foreign Policy. She would have complete fiscal independence, would be permitted to raise a military or let us say a militia force, and would simply be called on to give the Imperial Navy free entrance to her ports and harbors. We believe that military authority would endorse this guarantee as ample for Imperial defence, and we have reason to think that Nationalist Ireland would accept it or even offer it of her own free will. We have but one quarrel with this statement. It is a formula; and what Ireland and England want to-day is an act of final grace and oblivion, penetrating to the heart of their estrangement. There can be no mitigation of the evils and horrors of the Irish situation until the Government performs a deed of elementary honesty to the people of this country. That is to notify them that there is a state of war between it and the people of Ireland. This declaration is necessary to the honor of England. For if the two nations are not at war, British soldiers and policemen, regular and irregular, are committing acts of murder and outrage which place them outside the bounds of the civilized order. The custodians of the lives and the property of Irishmen are destroying those lives and laying waste that property. The sheep-dog has turned wolf; the self-appointed custodian has become a thief.

It is no defence of this conduct that other Irishmen, still at large, have committed murders, of which our agents and officials have been the victims. There is the law, enforced by an armed police, the most costly and the most elaborately trained in Europe. And there are the special re-enforcements of it which Parliament has conferred upon Mr. George—including the sweeping powers of inquiry and search, the suspension of trial by jury, and the swift and secret action of military law. If these do not avail, and if, in addition, one Irish town after another is given over to terror by arson and pillage, there is overwhelming proof that a rebellion against British rule exists, supported by the great majority of the Irish people, and that this rising is being suppressed by methods repugnant to the code of war, or even of

rebellion. Even if war were proclaimed, it would only be possible to defend such practices by reference to the most brutal passages in modern fighting, such as the German *razzia* in Belgium. But when pursued against men and women acknowledged to be subjects of the Crown, they sink to the level of the dragonnades of Louvois, or the Turkish atrocities in South-Eastern Europe. Every civilized Government has the right to protest against such inhumanities, and to invoke against them the conscience to which we appealed against an enemy engaged in open war.

The Government, therefore, have not dared to face the truth about Ireland, though in the revelation of that truth lies not only their hope of escape from the lash of the world's censure, but, paradoxical as it may appear, the way out of their difficulties. For the moment the people realize that there is a state of war in Ireland, they will insist on exploring every possible road to peace. No one wants another bloody encounter between England and Ireland; and none, or few, will tolerate a second '98. Home Rule doctrine of late has had a marvellous resurrection. In Ireland, the horrors of our undeclared war on her people and industries have simply wiped Southern Unionism off the political map. There are no Unionists left. There is only Orange fanaticism, and its political leader, Sir Edward Carson. And in England Home Rule has captured the great journal whose exertions kept it at bay for two generations. The moment, therefore, that the British army of occupation in Ireland is let loose as an engine of open war and destruction, British opinion will declare, almost with one accord, for an effort to end this strife for ever, and men will turn their minds to means of political amelioration.

Such means must, in our view, be of the most generous character. They must, further, be such as to impress the imaginations of both peoples, and to give them a visible witness of their sincerity and their solemn purport. In this necessity such very different observers as the "Times" and Mr. Asquith concur, and we entirely agree with them. Being at war, and desiring peace, we are bound to make a direct approach to the enemy, through the acknowledged leaders of their forces. Therefore a proposal for a constituent assembly is neither an adequate nor an appropriate instrument for the conclusion of an Anglo-Irish Treaty. Our method must go deeper, must appeal to the political genius of our race, and bring up the reserve forces of the Constitution. It will be observed that a difference appears, not only in the form of Lord Grey's and Mr. Asquith's proposals, but in their method. Lord Grey prefers to leave Ireland to settle the lines of her future Constitution. Mr. Asquith announces a definite and a generous British policy. We think it may be profitable to combine these two methods.

In this spirit we desire to make the following suggestions:—

1. That an Act of Parliament should at once be passed appointing the Prince of Wales Regent of Ireland. The appointment would be strictly limited in point of time, and would be used for the attainment of the following purposes.

2. The Prince, on taking up his residence in Dublin Castle, would be empowered to place it under a Commission of English, Scottish, and Irish Judges, suspending all other supreme functionaries and controls, including, of course, the Lord Lieutenancy. Such men as Lord Haldane, Lord Finlay, Lord Shaw, Sir John Sankey, suggest themselves as proper guardians of such a trust.

3. He would also issue a proclamation of peace and amity to the Irish people, calling on them to abstain from violence, declaring an amnesty for all political prisoners, and assuring them of the disarmament of the police of all grades, and the retirement of the Army to the ports.

4. He would then summon the heads of Sinn Fein, and the leaders of the Orangemen, to an interim Irish Cabinet, which would include representatives of the Imperial Cabinet and of the Dominions. This body would be charged with the duty of drawing up a Constitution for Ireland, subject to guarantees for the safety of the Empire and the British Isles, and to the assent of the Imperial Parliament.

When its task had been concluded, the Regency of the Prince would determine, unless all parties desired him to remain as a virtually independent Sovereign, or, better still, as the Constitutional President of an Irish Republic, in friendly alliance with Great Britain, but not in enforced subjection to her. Such a proposal would march further than the original programme of Sinn Fein, and would give a second Grattan's Parliament a dignity such as its exemplar never wore. Ireland's leaders have, we believe, declared that the erection of a separate Royalty for Ireland would be a symbol of what they most desire, a co-ordinate Parliament. The British Army they might well regard as a foreign force. With the Navy they have no quarrel, and they might willingly concede it access to Irish ports as a normal right of Imperial defence.

We make this proposal because we are convinced that this is the Sybil's hour, and that we reject her ever-shrinking message at our peril. Already it lies beyond the power of England to settle Ireland. But she can help her to settle herself, calling in the still romantic power of Royalty, in the person of a popular and amiable Prince, and the democratic forces that gave England a new birth in a younger world. Their union in such a task, we believe, would assuage her spirit and re-awaken her hopes. The Prince would go to Ireland charged with a mission of freedom, and as the Envoy of one Nation to another. For the period of his rule, he would be Ireland's, not England's, representative; bearing in mind, in his relations with the British Army, the ones that he cemented with thousands of Irishmen on the fields of France. And the Dominions would return to Ireland in the name of the Irish race, with a call to renew its ancient glories.

[We think it right to add that the proposal which we have outlined was made without any knowledge of a somewhat similar suggestion made by the "Irish Vigilance Society" in the United States, a body of whose existence we were unaware.]

THE GUILT OF THE GOVERNMENT.

At this moment, the conduct of the British forces in Ireland is a leading topic of discussion in the Press of every civilized country. Never has foreign opinion been so little divided. It is a French paper that says that the atrocities at Balbriggan carry the mind back to the Middle Ages. But the newspapers of all countries speak in the same tone, and whether we look to Belgium or to Spain, to Holland or the United States, we receive the same impression of horror and amazement. Our rulers have the sort of standing in European opinion that the Austrian General Haynau had in 1850 when he was rash enough to visit London fresh from his exploits in flogging men and women for rebellion. Six years ago we set up a Commission to inquire into the atrocities in Belgium, and a member of the present Cabinet had a seat on that Commission. Its report was severe. What sort of report would be issued by a Commission appointed—not by a hostile but by a friendly Government—on the long list of outrages condoned by our Ministers in the last twelve months?

For these outrages Ministers are clearly responsible. They began over a year ago. Some people talk as though Balbriggan was the first serious atrocity, whereas the sort of thing that happened there had happened literally scores of times in different parts of Ireland. One particularly scandalous case was the second sacking of Fermoy—a reprisal for the kidnapping of a British general, not for murder or bloodshed—at the end of June. This was not a matter of a slight and temporary failure of discipline. It was an organized piece of savagery in which men and officers were implicated. There was no secret about it. How did the Government act? Mr. Churchill, using language worthy of a Prussian Minister, declared, in the House of Commons, on July 27th: "Suitable disciplinary action has been taken. *Certain officers have been censured, and a number of soldiers have had their leave stopped.*" The sort of punishment that a man gets for the mildest offence known in the Army is inflicted for burning houses and attacking civilians. An officer is liable to be cashiered for drunkenness. For leading this attack on civilians the "suitable" punishment is censure. Is it any wonder that after this encouragement the system of town wrecking increased rapidly, and that in the next eight weeks forty-seven towns and villages suffered from the violence of these licensed banditti? In other words, the British Minister inflicted a punishment of such a kind as to encourage the soldiers to become what Abercromby saw they would become in 1797, "ruthless persecutors." If Abercromby had been in the House of Commons, we know what he would have said:—"I clearly saw that the discipline of the troops would be completely ruined, and that they would be led into a thousand irregularities contrary to law." But the Government preferred that this should happen to the alternative course of abandoning coercion. They were determined to crush Ireland, even if it cost the discipline and efficiency of the British Army.

The indictment against the Government goes further. Not content with conniving at these outrages, they proceeded to enlist a force to carry on a guerilla war. In March they began to recruit for the R.I.C. from ex-soldiers in England, and in June, they began to recruit the auxiliaries,

a force of British ex-officers and men, for service in Ireland. The real significance of this departure can be judged from the fact that it was announced by the Lord Chancellor in the Lords, and by Mr. Lloyd George to a deputation headed by the Duke of Northumberland. These men were put into barracks or camps, where they seem to have had little to do except play cards, drink, and read the inflammatory circulars issued by their superiors. What had Mr. Lloyd George in mind when he enlisted this force? Did he imagine it to be specially amenable to discipline? And what steps did he take to secure it?

The answer is—NONE. No steps were taken then and we are unaware that, beyond a few words of double or weak intent, any have been taken since. Sir Hamar Greenwood made a speech to the R.I.C. last week, in which, after telling them that "the number of alleged reprisals is few," a sentence that would have served Cobbett as an example of confused English, he went on to say that reprisals would ruin the force. That means nothing. What we want to know is who is to be punished for Balbriggan? A hundred men do not go and sack a town, with lorries and implements, without any sort of order or organization. Did Major-General Tudor know about it? If not, in what kind of order is the force he commands? If he had been suspended immediately—as he would have been if the Government did not favor these "reprisals"—Trim and other towns might have been saved. As it is, we are told that the Government do not countenance reprisals, and that they mean to put a stop to them. Yet day after day reprisals continue as briskly as ever. What would we think of any other Government which showed this degree of resolution and sincerity? During the war it was the custom for coroners' inquests after a Zeppelin raid to bring in a verdict of guilty against the Kaiser. When Irish coroners' courts brought in this kind of verdict they were suppressed. But can anybody acquit the Government of responsibility for the crimes committed by its agents, when these agents go unpunished and are not even suspended from their office? The first question to be put to a Government in such a position is surely "What action did you take?" And the answer of Mr. Lloyd George's Government is, "After this sort of thing had been going on for twelve months, we said in public that it could not be countenanced, and our chief executive officials in Ireland said also in public that it could not be punished: we left it at that, and the reprisals continued."

No political society ever had a stronger case against an Administration than Ireland's case against the British Government at this moment. For every Irishman outside the North-East corner, Catholic or Protestant, Unionist, Home Ruler or Sinn Féiner, the British Government represents disorder of the kind that the Tsar and the Bolsheviks inflicted. If the British Government had no police force in this part of Ireland—if, that is, Ireland were in the condition of Scotland or Wales—there would be no crime and no disturbance of Irish life and peace. We put a police force there for our own Imperialist purposes; for the purpose for which Imperialist Russia and Prussia put a police force in Poland. After months of coercion, after hundreds of Irishmen have been locked up or deported for offences purely political and unaccompanied by violence, policemen began to be murdered. The Government replies by giving policemen and soldiers the right to kill, burn, and loot at pleasure. If we were at war with

Ireland, there would be precedents for reprisals, but not for these reprisals. The Manual of Military Law lays down that "reprisals should never be resorted to by the individual soldier but only by order of a commander." It also prescribes that reprisals should follow a definite complaint. The reprisals in Ireland are not so regulated or controlled. One day a man is shot because he has the same name as somebody else who is suspected; another day a boy is taken out of one house and shot because somebody in the next house is believed to have had something to do with an attack on a barracks. This is the nearest approach to method or reason in this campaign of frightfulness. The Irish authorities seem to have formed the conclusion that Ireland can be cowed by terrorism; and in the pursuit of that purpose every kind of weapon has been employed.

When Parliament meets we hope that somebody will press for a full inquiry into the secret service, and the circumstances under which men like Hardy were released from prison. Is it possible that we have been letting loose men of the type of Oliver to do the devil's work in Ireland? The resulting terrorism at least is so real that to our knowledge leading Irish landowners dare not complain of the burning of their property by soldiers for fear that a worse fate will befall them. We have tried many ways of governing Ireland. We destroyed her land system; we stole her commons; we cut down the forests of which Spenser wrote with such beauty in the "Faerie Queene"; we set up a foreign religion; we planted her provinces with colonists, as Prussia did Poland; we stifled her industries. We have governed by penal laws; by a religious ascendancy; by Orange violence. To-day we govern by a military terrorism that is drawing upon us the angry eyes of all Europe. Some fatality seems to ordain that we shall always relapse into the morals of an earlier age when we deal with a crisis in Ireland. The devastation of Ireland under Elizabeth in the sixteenth century was carried out with even greater savagery than that which marked our treatment of Scotland in the fourteenth. To-day, after solemnly lecturing Europe on the sacred right of every small nation to its freedom in this age of democracy, we repeat the crimes against which most decent Englishmen protested over a century ago. Mr. Asquith, therefore, does not exaggerate when he calls the last nine months "the most deplorable and scandalous chapter even in the annals of Irish Government." That chapter is the work of a Government, unembarrassed by an Opposition, and enjoying greater power and ampler opportunities than any Government for a century. What has the House of Commons to say to it?

THE LEAGUE OF M. LEYGUES.

THE League of Nations has now been sufficiently long in being, and in operation, for it to be possible to examine its past, determine its present position, and consider its future. The League, it must be said at once, occupies a very curious place to-day in the international firmament. When it suddenly rose above the darkness of the war, shining with all the splendor of Presidential rhetoric, it became at once the beacon of Liberalism and Labor, and the scorn of the sabre-rattler and imperialist. The man in the street is quite unconscious of the fact that the position has gradually been completely reversed; to the first followers or teachers of Mr. Wilson the League is now a dark star or a dead planet, while it is

beginning to be emblazoned side by side with the skull and cross-bones on the shield of every militarist. This is a dangerous situation, because, as we shall show, it obscures to the eyes of ordinary men and women the real facts in the international position.

If one considers the League's work and achievements piecemeal, one can find a great deal to say in its favor. The Covenant was one of those timid compromises which the world recognizes as the best products of statesmanship; its authors acted like a man who, after discovering that the foundations of his house are rotten, and while the roof is already falling about his ears, puts in an expensive patent contrivance for keeping out the damp and killing the blackbeetles. Yet the League, despite the crippled state in which it sprang into life from this document, has already proved the correctness of those who originally argued that the time was ripe for a great development of international government through a permanent association of States, endowed with regular organs for making international law, settling international disputes, and executing international decisions.

In the last two months the Council of the League has dealt with two typical cases of international dispute, the Aaland Islands and the Polish-Lithuanian question. Both cases were of the utmost interest to the student of international relations. They showed clearly the difficulties of international government, but at the same time they proved that a League, provided that there is an honest desire among statesmen to carry out the League idea, is a most powerful instrument for maintaining peace, even under the most unfavorable circumstances. The Aaland Islands case deserves far more attention than has been given to it. Here was a dispute between two nations over a question of nationality; the inhabitants of the islands, although incorporated in the State of Finland, demanded that they should be incorporated in the State of Sweden, and this demand was supported by Sweden. It was a situation in which things were already drifting towards war. Britain, a State not immediately interested in the question, exercising the right conferred upon her by Article 11 of the Covenant, brought the whole question before the League Council.

A problem immediately arose which some writers on the League had foreseen would be the greatest difficulty in the way of international action, particularly in the most important cases involving nationality and irredentism. Finland pleaded that, since the Aalanders were nationals of Finland, their case lay "solely within the domestic jurisdiction of" Finland, and therefore, under Article 15, could not be dealt with by the League. The Council remitted this question for consideration and report to a Commission of jurists, and the Commission's finding that the matter was not wholly within the domestic jurisdiction of Finland was adopted by the Council. Anyone with a very little knowledge of the history of international relations will recognize the importance of this decision: it establishes a precedent which may have far-reaching effects and constitutes a more remarkable victory for the idea of internationalism (as against that of the water-tight sovereign independent State) than the uninitiated would realize. Truth compels us to admit that, if the interests involved in the dispute had been a little nearer to the main current of European politics, we can imagine the learned jurists finding reasons for an identically opposite decision; nevertheless the important fact is that the finding was made and is on record, for it has brought the dispute within the competence of the League, it has stopped the immediate danger of war, and it has made it possible that a settlement by the Council may be accepted by both parties.

The Polish-Lithuanian question was more dramatic

but really less instructive: it was scarcely a normal type of international dispute which a League should be called upon to deal with, for it arose out of an already existing state of war. But when Lithuania appealed to the League against Poland's threat of war or warlike action, and when, after many vicissitudes, this appeal resulted in the signing of an armistice, we again had a signal proof of the immense effect that a genuine League might have in helping to keep the peace in Europe. Unfortunately the emphasis has to be laid on the word "might," for the two cases which we have examined themselves show that the League of the Covenant which is embedded in the Versailles Treaty can never fulfil that function. When Poland last week promptly broke the agreement which M. Paderewski had made with the Lithuanian representative before the Council and invaded Lithuania, she openly flouted the League. In doing this she obviously reckoned on the fact that France would see that the League took no action against her on that account. Yet almost at the very moment that this was happening, M. Leygues, the new Premier of France and the mouth-piece of the new President, was solemnly assuring a cynical Europe that practically the only principle of his new Government's foreign policy was that "France will make of the League of Nations a powerful living organism to close the era of wars."

This statement of M. Leygues, side by side with the action of France's Polish *protégé*, brings us back to the fact which we noted above that to-day the old lovers of the League on the Left view it with suspicion while its old haters on the Right have become its lovers. And we can now see the reason more clearly. The League, embedded in the Versailles Treaty, is inevitably regarded by France and the satellites of French policy simply as a possible instrument for maintaining or executing the system which that Treaty seeks to impose upon Europe. When it suits French statesmen to use the League, "according to the letter of the Versailles Treaty," in their policy of keeping Germany down, of blockades, and wars, and armed alliances, and economic imperialism, then they use it as "a powerful living organism." When it does not suit them or fit in with this policy, they simply ignore it and their obligations under the Covenant. It is not difficult to give examples. The treaty of military alliance between France and Belgium carries out the punitive and hostile policy of the Treaty of Versailles, and is destructive of any real League of Nations. Accordingly, in defiance of their obligations under Article 18, the two States are going to keep the terms of their agreement secret, and will not register it with the League. When France wishes Poland to attack Russia, she stops any action by the League under Article 11, but when Russia appears to be on the point of crushing this attack upon her and her attacker, the chief members of the League attempt to use the League in order to save Poland. Though the Treaty entrusts the government of the Saar Basin to the League, the Council refuses even to examine into allegations of French aggression in the administration of the territory.

The situation thus created is disastrous in more ways than one. The League is "a powerful living organism" in the hands of French imperialism; it is really powerless as an organ for doing justice and keeping the peace between nations. A new State like Poland, therefore, openly flouts it, and to-morrow, if the decision in the Aaland question goes against her, we may see Finland flouting it. France, trusting to her system of force and alliances, prevents the League consolidating itself as a real instrument or bulwark of peace. This, again, reacts upon the position of other members of the League. The League is useless to them, and they are

forced, therefore, as in the case of the Little Entente, to form themselves into counter-alliances. The agreement between Czecho-Slovakia, Jugo-Slavia, and Roumania, though it is justified as a protective measure against the Hungarian-French alliance, is no less destructive of the League of Nations idea and system than is the original agreement between France and Hungary. We are, in fact, watching the old European system of alliances and balances, which the League was to supersede, being carefully built up again in a new pattern under cover of the League.

The question is now seriously arising whether, under such circumstances, a nation like Britain should not withdraw from this sham or perverted League. The argument for "making the best of" a faulty instrument is well-known and is always attractive. Given a change of Government in certain countries of Europe (including our own), it would be quite possible to convert the League into an instrument of justice and peace, and if the present evil was confined to the perversion of the League and the building up of alliances, much could be said in favor of making the best of it. But the evil is not confined to that; it is intensified by popular ignorance of foreign affairs. The cynical statesmen who direct European policy and a few unhappy people whose duty or habit it is to observe their actions and dissect their characters, know that the League has been perverted. But the man in the street still believes that the League is an instrument of peace and that the League, which lives in an hotel in Geneva, and which M. Leygues and Mr. Balfour talk about, is the same League of Peace which Mr. Wilson talked so beautifully about when the guns were drum-firing on the Somme. That this delusion should persist among ordinary men and women until the moment when M. Leygues's League produces the inevitable world-war again, would be absolutely fatal to any chance of establishing a real League of Nations. The only way of destroying a delusion is to face the facts and their consequences, and that in this case seems to involve our withdrawal from the living organism of the League of M. Leygues.

THE FAILURE OF BRUSSELS.

BRUSSELS, Tuesday.

THE Financial Conference of Brussels has in the main three characteristics: its atmosphere differs entirely from that of the various other Peace Conferences; it is pervaded by a spirit of pessimism, so that its members appear oppressed by a sense of the futility of their proceedings; and it appears to work at random and without plan or well-defined aim. Let me try to trace these characteristics to their sources.

The different atmosphere is no doubt due to the origin of this gathering, and especially to the difference between its proceedings and those of the other Conferences. All previous meetings have been called by conquering Governments. But this Conference has been convened by the League of Nations; it knows no victors, vanquished, or neutrals, but simply nationalities, whose delegates meet, for the first time since the war, on a footing of perfect equality. Even the Germans are treated by everybody with perfect courtesy, whatever the hidden feeling may be; they have a vote, and this vote counts for as much as anybody else's; and they are as free to speak as any other delegate. A still more important difference is that all the proceedings here are

public. There is none of the secrecy of preceding conferences, and consequently we have none of the scheming and plotting, of the consequent distrust and idle rumors which were the bane of every previous Peace Conference. If Brussels should yield any results they will consist of "open covenants openly arrived at."

All this should augur well. But unfortunately there are other peculiarities which offset the advantages accruing from this League of Nations staging. In the first place there is the language difficulty. Nearly all the delegates are educated men, and after a fashion they nearly all speak French or English, the two official languages. But few of them speak either language fluently enough to risk oratory before an educated and critical audience; and the disadvantages of this are obvious. Then the delegates are all specialists; men with set notions, with firm convictions evolved from reflection and influenced by their own temperament and outlook upon life; and such men are apt to be somewhat unyielding, and little open to conviction. Also, the delegates are as yet not used to each other, nor to this international parliament, through which paths of routine and procedure have yet to be cut.

But of all disturbing influences the greatest is undoubtedly the restriction of the debate to purely and strictly financial questions. The only sentences which distinguished the inaugural address of the chairman, M. Ador, from all similar orations, told the delegates that they must confine themselves to financial problems, and especially that they must not trespass upon the sacred fields of the Treaties, or of questions arising out of the Treaties; these are *choses jugées*. Now most of the delegates are either practical business men or schooled economists; and they at once saw the meaning of this limitation. It put them in the position of a number of physicians called to a consultation in a very bad case, who are told that they may see the tongue and feel the pulse of the patient, but that they must not examine his vital organs or their functions. They know full well that the financial world-problems are not things apart, but closely related to and intertwined with many of our other world-problems. Most intimately of all with the Treaties, and their impossible and unworkable stipulations; very emphatically with the question of the indemnities; and further with the problems of the new countries and the new frontiers, with the new political conditions and currents, with the questions of raw produce, transport, tariffs, commercial intercourse, labor, wages, and what not. It is impossible to divorce the financial problems from these questions; aye, the dangerous financial conditions are to a very large extent merely symptoms pointing to the general political, social, and moral upheaval. And the chairman's restriction, imposed for reasons not yet apparent, accounts largely, I believe, for the spirit of pessimism and the sense of futility that pervade this Conference.

The debate on the principles of Government Finance was very ably opened by the British delegate, Mr. R. H. Brand, and as ably closed by the same gentleman, with the proposal that a committee should be nominated which should make its recommendations to the Conference after having specially studied (1) the problem of the equilibrium of budgets by the reduction of expenditure, the limitation of armaments, the abolition of subsidies; (2) the question of the increase of taxes if that was necessary. On this subject the committee will study the various aspects of a capital levy and examine the relative advantages of direct and indirect taxation, it will likewise occupy itself with the limitation of loans; (3) the problem of the consolidation of the external debt of each country and the date of repayment of these

loans; (4) the question of the utility of maintaining interior and exterior restrictions which limited trade.

This committee is, up to the time of writing, the only tangible fruit of the Conference, now resolved into a network of Committees. As was to be expected, the past week has, with one small exception, produced nothing but academic discussions. Their tenor reminded financial "old timers" strongly of the bi-metallic controversy of the 'nineties; it was all theory, and the theoreticians frequently disagreed. When they were unanimous they merely endorsed the views of all sensible people by enunciating what have become modern economic truisms or platitudes; such as that individuals and nations must live within their incomes, that borrowing and inflation must cease, and that working and saving are the only roads to recovery. All this we knew before. Occasionally a delegate would let off fireworks, which created quite an impression; but they were soon found to have left nothing behind save a few useless cinders on the lawn of realities. They probably impressed and also informed the general reader; but every moderately trained economist and financier recognized them at once as mere *réchauffés* of very old economic maxims spiced with a few *post-bellum* platitudes.

In a word, the early stages of the Conference revealed no leader, no policy, and no promise. It was all theory, and any lover of Goethe will understand now why the League of Nations bound the copious literature published in advance of the Conference in *grey* covers. "Denn grau, mein Freund, ist alle Theorie," is one of the most-quoted lines in "Faust."

There were only two practical proposals, and one of these—the scheme for relieving financial needs by an issue of gold bonds, advocated by M. Delacroix, the Belgian Premier—was impracticable; chiefly because it will merely add to the inflation which we are here to combat. The other covers only a relatively small field, but is a really practical proposal. It has been brought forward by Mr. Ter Meulen, a taciturn, cautious, level-headed countryman of mine. His partnership in Hope & Co., the Amsterdam agents of the Bank of England, has secured a lifelong contact with banking realities and credit practice, and a year's hidden but important work around the Peace Conference and its aftermath has made him familiar with the world's economic needs, has given him great influence among the silent forces behind present-day economic policy, and placed him very high in the estimation of those most concerned and best informed. I am not in his confidence—he shuns self-advertisement and publicity—but I can hardly believe that his cautious temperament would have allowed him to propound any plan of the success of which he had not assured himself beforehand. His practical mind keeps him away from anything in the least visionary or even "ideal." As a banker he knows that credit is the son of security. His scheme for credits is therefore based upon collateral security to be furnished by the individual, upon guarantees to be provided by the borrower's Government, and upon supervision to be exercised both by the Governments and a Central Commission, to be nominated by the Conference. Described as briefly as possible, it comes to this:—

An importer in a given country, who wishes to purchase goods from an exporter in some other country, would, in the first instance, approach the Central Commission, in order to obtain its consent to import such goods against the security of the bonds of which I have just spoken. This consent would only be given in the case of necessity, or of raw material to be imported for manufacture, and to

be re-exported as finished or half-finished articles. As a second stage, the importer would settle with the exporter all details as regards the credit to be allowed, such as, for instance, the period for which the credit would be granted, the rate of interest, the amount of collateral, which, in this case, is the nominal value of the bond of his Government, to be put up by the importer.

The importer would then approach his own Government, and borrow from it bonds to an amount and value necessary to cover his transaction. Each country would arrange, as it thought fit, the conditions for the loan of such bonds to its nationals. If the Government desired, the importer could be required to put up security against the loan of bonds, the nature of such security being agreed upon between the importer and his Government.

So long as the conditions under which a credit had been granted were being regularly fulfilled by the importer, the coupons of bonds held in this way as collateral by exporters, would be returned *in natura* at their due date to the importer. The importer would, in his turn, restore these coupons to his Government, and the Government thereupon would become entitled to the money held in the exporter's country for the payment of these particular coupons. When the credit expired and was paid off, the exporter would return the pledged bonds to the importer, who, in his turn, would hand them back to his Government against release of the security pledged by him. The Government would then be authorized to lend these bonds again for a fresh transaction.

This plan will probably go through, as it has wide support, among others, from influential English bankers, and from M. Avenol, one of the French delegates. But it is the only mouse, or, if you will, rat, which the Conference mountain has brought forth. We must wait and see whether this assembly will produce more. But expectations do not run high. Its atmosphere remains cynical, its members are timid and "practical"; but what is wanted is a wise boldness, with a strong dash of idealism. As this is lacking, it is useless to expect vast, bold schemes. I do not, for example, anticipate anything like a big world-fund to help dying or weakened nations; nor do I anticipate a remedy for the dilapidated currencies. The proper thing to do would be to "scrap" all debased moneys, to accept its depreciation as fact, to work off the loss this causes, and to start the peoples concerned with new, sound money systems. But speculators and capitalists, who bought or otherwise own crowns, marks, &c., hope to see their present-day holdings increased ten or twenty-fold by the patient labor of one or two generations of defeated peoples. In these days, however, the peoples are no longer in the frame of mind to labor to such purpose.

This problem of the debased currencies lies at the root of most of our social and labor questions. But so far there is no sign that at the Brussels Conference a man will arise with the courage needed to tackle it wisely and manfully. That is why Brussels will, as regards really essential matters, be a failure.

S. F. VAN OSS.

P.S.—President Ador has informed Press representatives that the committees into which the Conference resolved itself will terminate their labors on Thursday afternoon, when the result arrived at will be published. The four committees, after free discussion, reached unanimity, and he regards their results as favorable and optimistic. But I believe that there will be nothing startling—no indemnities envisaged, no world loan, and no general measures against depreciated currencies.

MR. GEORGE AND THE CONSTITUTION.

I.—THE HOUSE OF COMMONS.

SINCE Voltaire and Montesquieu focussed the attention of Europe upon the House of Commons, no other legislative assembly has received a praise so universal or so continuous. Nor, until some fifteen years ago, was that eulogy undeserved. No one can read the debates upon the Reform Bill of 1832, the discussions of foreign policy under Gladstone and Disraeli, the speeches on Home Rule in the later eighties, without a sense that the mind and will of the nation was not unsplendidly represented there. But a change has come over the House of Commons to which too little attention has been paid. It is not merely that it is so overwhelmed with business that few subjects are discussed and no subject discussed with adequacy. It is not merely that the bonds of discipline have been so tightened as to make the private member, in Burke's contemptuous phrase, "a weather-cock on the top of the edifice." It might with some reason be argued that these are the inevitable results of our transition from a state mainly concerned with the preservation of order to a state engaged in a vaster and far more positive enterprise.

What is far more important is the way in which the position of Parliament has altered relative to the problem with which the nation is mainly concerned. It is too little realized that we are engaged in making a revolution; or, rather, we are concerned with the conquest of positions which, if they cannot be won by peace, may be attained at the cost of civil war. What is broadly termed the capitalist system has largely broken down; and the adjustment of industrial organization to the demands of Labor, conscious at last of its inherent strength, has become the main question of the hour. Nor is that all. The problem of colonial relationships, as with Ireland and India and Egypt, was never more acute; the problem of international relationships, the steering of some safe path between the extreme reaction of France and the reckless experimentalism of Russia, was never more intricate. To none of these questions has the House of Commons anything of value to contribute. Upon industrial questions it has mainly grumbled at the burden of the Excess Profits Tax; upon the new status demanded by Labor it has had no word of intelligent assistance to offer. Upon Ireland it has merely upheld the worst excesses of the worst Government of modern times. Upon India, though it passed a somewhat stunted edition of the Montagu reforms, it tempered that accidental generosity by a passionate approval of General Dyer's brutality. Upon Russia it has never held any opinion save the emotion of bewildered amazement; and when, on the threshold of the Polish adventure in July of this year, it was granted a supreme opportunity to vindicate its character, it stood idly by while an assembly of trade unionists spoke that clear sense of the nation which Gladstone and even Lord Palmerston would have declared to an eager people from the Treasury bench.

The House of Commons is thus lamentably unequal to its functions at a time when it is elected by the largest constituency in its history. It is, indeed, upon this basis that its performances are mainly defended. "The nation," so we are told, "is governed by the Parliament of its choice; and until that Parliament is rejected at the polls no other body of men has the same clear right to interpret the national opinion." An answer to this

argument might proceed upon several grounds. It might insist that a Parliament elected in the deluded enthusiasm of victory is no index to the mind of peace; and it might point to the numerical monstrosities of our electoral system as an obvious method of evading the national purpose.

But it is from a deeper channel that the stream of delusion takes its rise. In appearance, the House of Commons represents groups of men who live together, broadly speaking, without reference to the special occupations in which they are engaged. In theory, that is to say, the House is an attempt to express the common civic consciousness rather than some private interest or special privilege. In actual fact, it can make no shadow of pretence to the objective distinction such expression would imply. Beneath the cloak of geographical structure it is easy to discern the appearance of vocationalism. The House of Commons is a mirror of the national mind only as tempered by the special interests which secure representation there.

A simple table will make this clear. In the House of Commons of January, 1920, the following economic interests were represented there:—

Landowners ...	115	General Manufacturers	138
Insurance Directors ...	61	Bank Directors	28
Coal Directors ...	17	Oil Directors	4
Shipping Directors ...	30	Lawyers	102
Textile Manufacturers	19	Brewers	10
Army Officers	50	Naval Officers	12
Doctors	10	Labour Members	65

This table, indeed, does less than justice to the situation; for a Member of Parliament may be a director of half-a-dozen companies of a similar nature, and yet appear only once in each item of the table. Nor does it at all fully display the affiliations of which the House may make boast. There are no less than 158 members who, by birth or marriage or personal position, possess, or are related to persons with, hereditary titles; and this, be it noted, does not include the members of those "county families" who are "of" our aristocracy, even though an actual title be lacking. Oxford and Cambridge send 138 members between them to the House; and they are but few who can, without ample means, be educated there. The public schools, in the narrow sense of that term, have 148 representatives; and of these Eton and Harrow contribute not less than 93. It is needless to point out that our public schools are not maintained for the education of the poor; and it thus becomes impossible to avoid the conclusion that the House, despite the broad bottom from which its powers are derived, is, in reality, the representative of an intricately connected pluto-aristocracy, the power of Labor being submerged before the flowing tide with which Property, in its various forms, protects itself.

And the nature of that protection needs the most vivid emphasis it can be given. It is unimportant how the director of an insurance company gets into the House of Commons; when he is there he represents insurance, and we can be certain that he will protect the interests of insurance companies against, for example, the kind of system evolved by Congress to protect the interests of American soldiers and sailors. If we desired to mitigate some of the grosser evils of our legal system, there would be 102 of its representatives to equate the *status quo* with the fundamental principles of nature. If we were anxious to soften the harsh angles of our landed system,

its representatives are there in power to defend it. To answer that Labor has its representatives is clearly no answer at all; for so long as a very limited number of landholders can summon twice the power of six million trade unionists—quite apart from the unorganized millions of workers—the existing anomaly is clearly intensified. Our Parliament is, broadly speaking, a Parliament of Capital and Land, not a Parliament of Labor. If we look to the Navy, we do not hear the voice of the lower deck. If we are anxious about the thought of the Army, there is only the channel of the commissioned officer through whom it can be found. The railways speak not through the consumers of their services nor the desires of their servants, but through the highly specialized voice of their directors, who, as our recent experience has demonstrated, are not without ability to take thought for their private concerns. The representation of insurance or mines or banks may be out of view of constitutional law. Theoretically, it may be fortuitous; practically, it is predominant. And it is practical predominance which determines the character of legislation.

But the power of property does not cease with the House of Commons. The day has long passed when the House of Lords was too well-bred for trade. The modern peer has gone into the city; and the city has erected a formidable rampart in the Upper Chamber. The House of Lords is usually thought of as essentially a territorial assembly. That is largely true; but the following table suggests that the Lords are interested in other forms of capital besides land:—

Number of Lawyers in the House of Lords	28
Insurance Directors	94
Bank Directors	68
Coal Directors	29
Oil Directors	11
Shipping Directors	33
Railway Directors	62
Brewers	11
Textile Manufacturers	10
Other Mercantile Interests	84

There is a certain solidity about these figures. This power is not derived from the polling-booth even at first remove, as with the House of Commons; but it is a substantial power. A noble lord who is a director of a coal company will find it difficult to sympathize with the miners if Lord Gainford tells him that such sympathy is disastrous to mining finance; and if a bill for the nationalization of mines came before the House of Lords, he would have the opportunity to express his feelings in the most practical form.

And here is to be found the secret of the character of the modern legislative assembly. We are seeking to establish the foundations of a new social order through instruments whose aptness is to the defence of the old. We are asking men who enjoy enormous antecedent opportunities voluntarily to deprive themselves of their handicap in the race for power. It is an impossible request. There are, doubtless, occasional individuals who can see with clearness what is the public interest, and deliberately prefer it to their own; there are even occasional Members of Parliament who can make that choice. But when we deal with a class of men as a class, it is inevitable that they should equate their private good with the public welfare and translate it into terms of legislation.

The result is apparent in the present character of our public transactions. Labor does not agitate in the House of Commons, for the simple reason that it is unnatural to expect attention there. A speech by Mr. Smillie, backed by the threat of a strike, will command attention from

the Prime Minister, where a speech by Mr. Hartshorn in the House of Commons will merely secure the oblivion of two lines of neat summary in the next day's "Times." The Prime Minister does not trouble to attend the House, for the simple reason that the real decisions are not taken there. He has his majority; and he knows the unstated but clear assumptions upon which that majority can be held together. With that knowledge clearly in mind, he can bargain with groups of interests outside and use the House of Commons as a convenient vehicle of registration. Occasionally, indeed, an ardent soul like Captain Wedgwood Benn, mindful of past traditions, will angrily complain; but there will be no one save an assistant-secretary on the Treasury Bench to listen, and the assistant-secretary knows well enough that the complaint has been an empty formula these fifteen years.

Economic power, said Harrington nearly three hundred years ago, is the true lever of political power. That is the key to our present discontents. We speak of the mischief of party control as exercised by an omnipotent Cabinet. We watch unreal debates, we see questions unanswered, we notice bills passed without a word of discussion. Humane causes like the Plumage Bill are sacrificed to the demand of a single powerful interest. It is noteworthy that in an average division only 242 out of 710 members will vote; and most of them will be summoned by an elaborate system which enables them to record their decision without the bother of hearing argument. For the truth surely is that argument is out of place. The general lines of policy have already been laid down by the power before which even the Cabinet is powerless. Occasionally, as with the Coal Mines Commission Act, there will be concession to prevent a disaster in which the fortunes of property would themselves be involved. But the concession is always occasional and never continuous; and its results do not permeate policy as a whole.

And this can only mean that the decline of the House of Commons is derived from its absolute unfitness to cope with an epoch of drastic change. It is meant, as an institution, to defend the past, not to build the future. Its business men are not there to make possible great social schemes by means of a capital levy. Its coal directors are not there to discover the path to the nationalization of mines. Its shipping directors are not there to evolve conditions of life for their seamen which would make our ships something better than the worst of our slums. At every point, that is to say, where fundamental change is needed, the House of Commons, reinforced by the House of Lords, is, by its nature, destined to prevent that change. It may make minor concessions; it cannot concede the large issues. It makes not for social justice, but for the preservation of existing inequalities.

It is fifty years since Bagehot, in a memorable passage in his "English Constitution," advised the landowners in the Lords to make common cause with the plutocracy against the oncoming torrent of universal suffrage. It was a needless warning. The condition of a universal suffrage that would work is an adequate educational system; and that system would make impossible the continuance of capitalism on its present terms. In the result, the present order remains secure, but secure upon the edge of an abyss. It may declare fine principles. It may offer small sacrifices. The main lines of the future are outside the compass of its calculations. That is why the centre of political importance has passed outside the House of Commons. It will not return there until some great calamity compels us to the revivification of our institutional life.

HAROLD J. LASKI.

A London Diary.

LONDON, FRIDAY.

THE Liberal leaders have at last spoken on Ireland. But save for Mr. Henderson, Labor's pitiful silence—much resented in Ireland—continues. Its councils are, I imagine, divided; but the trouble with the Labor leaders is that as yet they lack the political mind. Some of its best politicians, men like Mr. MacDonald and Mr. Snowden, are almost out of action; and some of the rest are absorbed in sectional or purely industrial leadership. If only it had a man who could say to them: "For the present I will lead no more strikes, no more bread-and-butter movements. I am going to lead you against the rabble that calls itself a Government. I am out for 350 seats in the next Parliament. I am for turning Lloyd George out of it, and for setting up in his place a Ministry of honest men. Allies? I'll take any helper that comes along if he will agree, politically, on a few points that I am going to put to him. Radicals? Certainly! Decent democratic Tories like Lord Henry Bentinck? Of course! Come on, and we'll map out the seats together." Will Labor say this? Has it the pluck? It's the way to win, and there is no other.

I THINK the Asquith-Grey-Morley intervention will do great good; but the party in the Commons must see to it that it does not play the Prime Minister's game. Mr. George is tied to his Carson; he cannot accept a policy of Irish settlement if he would. He will, therefore, pick holes in it, ask about Ulster, and play to the patriotic gallery. My view is that a larger and more dramatic approach to the Irish question is needed than any British party now contemplates; but that, meanwhile, the party of honest men have work to do. That is to wring from Irish officialism and British statesmanship the truth about the policy of reprisals which lies hidden between them. In a sense, it lies as open as the corpse that, do what he would, the murderer could never conceal. Let the Government be made to say what the Black-and-Tans, who were neither soldiers nor policemen, and yet were called on to act as both, were recruited for; why their pillage went on for months unchecked; why the creameries were selected for destruction; why prominent Republicans (as the Georgian "Chronicle" boasted) were marked for death, and who directed the bands to their homes and sleeping places; who supplied the bombs and petrol they used, and arranged their ordered attacks; what was the inner organization of their barracks. These are the things to go for, and on which to call for witness on oath.

As for the camp life of these unhappy men, it has been an equal disgrace to England and Ireland. Soldiers here have received letter after letter of bitter shame, full of complaints of the confinement, the monotony of cards and drink, drink and cards, the besotted fury of the marauding expeditions, and the remorse that the sight of their terrified and half-naked victims excited. Put the wickedness of the police murders as high as one will, and there is still a long account to exact from the authors of the following iniquities.

BUT indeed this Government can do only evil in Ireland. The political and juridical side of Sinn Fein is now to be attacked. And here, if there is irregularity, there is also much good. The law that Sinn Fein administers is, by the abundant evidence that reaches me, mainly just, mild, and popular. Take Westport, a town that I know well. There the District Inspector is an able

and sensible man, who has been willing to accommodate himself to what the gentleman in Ibsen's "Enemy of the People" called "the local situation." This is certainly peculiar. The Crown holds no petty sessions; but the Sinn Fein arbitrators have a weekly meeting, and the Sinn Fein volunteers act (very effectively) as police on important occasions. Take an example. Owing to the wet weather the peat has not dried, and the people in this poor district have been left without fuel. So they marched off to Lord Sligo's woods, and began to cut them down at night; the lights of the woodcutters twinkling like fireflies in the dark while these forays went on. Lord Sligo appealed to Sinn Fein, and himself offered an arrangement about the wood, which was accepted. The raids ceased. A second want of the people was milk, and, lacking grazing ground, the farmers began to turn their cows into Lord Sligo's fields. The soldiers came down, but were persuaded to go away without making things perceptibly worse, either for the people of Westport or for Lord Sligo. Again a compromise was offered and accepted; and the people's cattle are now feeding peacefully on Lord Sligo's beautiful lawns.

It will be interesting to see what comes of Sir Eyre Crowe's appointment as Lord Hardinge's successor at the Foreign Office. It was inevitable, and it gives character to a rather toneless office. I do not know whether a cynical view of diplomacy is a disadvantage in these days, but I suppose the new Permanent Secretary possesses it; and with it as great an equipment of knowledge as any living practitioner of that art. He is also a firm and strong man; and unless we are always to be dragged at the heels of French Imperialism, grumbling and fuming, a Secretary who can stand up to M. Berthelot is a highly desirable innovation at the F.O. But I am afraid, too, that he is much of a Bourbon; and unless Sir William Tyrrell's more modern mind can play on his, the liberalism of the Foreign Office under Sir Eyre Crowe will be much to seek.

NEVERTHELESS, a firm hand on Anglo-French relations will be all to the good. How far things have gone in the process of turning Belgium into a French satrapy as the result of a war to free her for ever from German domination I do not know; but what with the Secret Treaty (I am told that Belgian staff appointments are practically *viséd* in Paris) and the part that France has played in the Belgian attitude to Holland, they seem to be pretty well advanced in that direction. Or take Silesia. As the result of General Lerond's encouragement, the Poles deported one day five hundred German Jews, from Kattowitz, of whom nothing has been heard since. The British representative on the Inter-Allied Commission took the matter up, and made a great row. So serious was his account that Paris was obliged to recall this General. As a result there has been a marked improvement in Franco-British relationships, as there might be in Poland, if only we insisted that France must stop egging on the Poles to war, while we counsel them to make peace. Or turn to Geneva and the Conference on reparations. We have at last put our foot down and called on the French to redeem their promise at Spa, and join us in holding that necessary meeting. But the French will not go to Geneva, and are now trying to bring off a separate arrangement with Germany. Nagging and dodging will never stop these disloyalties. What is wanted is a strong policy in Downing Street, ending, if the French go on ignoring our aims and desires, in a withdrawal from all forms of combined action.

Nothing is perfect in this world; therefore we must not repine too much if the war, which gave democracy and freedom to Europe, has brought an earlier and less conspicuous blessing of human society to Africa. That is Slavery. I talked the other day to two friends of the African people. One assured me that in Angola the slave trade (for that is the true character of the traffic in black labor) was worse than ever. The other gave me a similar account of the Belgian Congo. Nor were the French behind-hand in the race for re-barbarization, for the recruits for their conscript armies were being marched down to the coast with collars and chains round their necks. But let us not plume ourselves on our superior virtue. For in British East Africa forced native labor has been imposed on the chiefs in the interests of the white settlers, and the Colonial Secretary has endorsed the act. So the Servile State has begun again on the Continent on which Servile States have been wont to begin. Only it is not likely to stop there.

THE world in which books and book-buying go on seems a less cheerful place now that Mr. Heinemann has left it. I saw little of him in recent years, but never without the sense of joy that some people's presence brings. He had, to begin with, a singularly winning smile, and his address and greeting seemed to imply a certain affectionate regard for you. And he was, I believe, a most kind and helpful man; whose accomplishments and intellectual interests placed him well above the conventional type of publisher. He loved his business, did much to advance its interests, and really adorned it. His hospitality was singularly gracious, and years ago one of its attractions was that you could enjoy it in the company of Whistler, and be at least a witness of the dazzling *danse macabre* which was Whistler's idea of conversation. Heinemann was also a good European; the art, the letters, the social life of many countries were known and dear to him, and the war, which destroyed so much of it, must have impoverished both the pleasure of his life and its usefulness. Peace to his gay and active spirit!

MR. BRIDGES-ADAMS may, I think, be congratulated on his "Henry V."; certainly he has solved the problem of giving to the Shakespearian drama the light and rapid view so essential to its rich and copious material and broad discursiveness. Here he is a master; and his example has already begun to revolutionize the English production of Shakespeare. But I am not satisfied. How often must one intone the platitude that it is not enough to show Shakespeare, but that he must be spoken? I will go bail for it that in spite of the critics Henry V. is a good play. Shakespeare saturated it with jingoism, and then turned the tables on its heroics by indicting in "Troilus and Cressida" a bitterer satire on war than Voltaire ever wrote. But there is more subtlety in his picture of Henry V. than the indignant pacifist perceives; Shakespeare's criticism of war lies in his wonderful study of an invading army on campaign, with a fifteenth century Cromwell at its head. But the workmanship is very unequal. There is stodge in abundance; and then a spell of divine verse. Now the fun is wretched clowning, and again the most exquisite touch of ironic comedy in literature. But Mistress Quickly's story of Falstaff's death was badly memorized; and if King Henry really ordered the sad and solemn priests to sing masses for King Richard's soul, I had almost to take his work of piety for granted. Our actors simply can't recapture the Shakespearian line. It is beyond them. But they might begin to learn.

A WAYFARER.

Life and Letters.

A GHOSTLY TELEPHONE.

Is the medium's occupation going—going—gone? Many a humble spiritualist whose intimacy with another world has long maintained him decently in this, must have felt his heart sink when he read a telegram from New York in last Monday's "Times." It told him that Mr. Edison had announced, two days before, his intention of perfecting a mechanical instrument by which he expects to establish free communication with the dead. The threatened invention is described as "a super-sensitive instrument so responsive to spirit impulses as to register and transmit them to mortals." Mr. Edison is a destructive person. He almost ruined gas by the electric light; he almost ruined the telegraph by the telephone; he almost ruined the theatre by the cinema; he almost ruined music by the gramophone. It is a terrible outlook for the medium's trade. In Mr. Edison's own words the peril is defined:—

"I have been at work for some time," he says, "building an apparatus to see if it is possible for persons who have left this earth to communicate with us. If those who have left the form of life we have on earth cannot use or affect the apparatus I am going to give them, then the chance of there being a hereafter of the kind we think about and imagine disappears. On the other hand, it will cause a tremendous sensation if it is successful."

With the last sentence everyone must heartily agree, but to no one will the sensation be more tremendous than to professional mediums. Mr. Edison himself treats them with a ridicule and scorn which threaten their very existence. Communication with the dead, he says, "if ever accomplished, will not be accomplished by occult, mystifying, mysterious, and weird means, such as are employed by the so-called mediums, but by scientific methods." He also speaks of "childish contraptions which seem so silly to the scientist." And by the word "Contraptions," we fear he may refer to the "Ouijas" which, in America, have taken the place of our familiar old "planchette"—itself an invention by which Faraday hoped to overturn the turning table as an expression of spiritual knowledge and advice. If the "Ouija" really is intended, another promising asset of the United States will suffer slump, and many a toy-store mourn. For what ambitious clerk, what amorous stenographer, has not summoned spirits from the abyss by purchase of an "Ouija"?

Sad for the mediums, sad for the toy-shops, will Mr. Edison's new invention be. And from the consumer's side (if we may apply the word consumers to the devout consultants of spirits) it is lamentable to reflect how much time and patient labor and good sound cash have been expended just for want of the super-sensitive instrument that Mr. Edison now contemplates. The feelings of departed spirits themselves must also be considered. What an unspeakable relief it will be for them to communicate direct by a super-sensitive telephone rather than through the agency of mediums who have sometimes been incapable of reporting their messages with the promptitude and exactness to which our Government telephone service has accustomed us! All spiritualists, we suppose, would admit that hitherto the mediums have not shown themselves invariably accurate or trustworthy. Though usually quick at observation, they have sometimes appeared deficient in knowledge, brain-power, imagination, and occasionally in honesty. That was to be expected, for the peculiar faculty of mediumship has not generally been found among the

wisest and most honorable types of the human race. It would be folly to demand scientific accuracy or incorruptible virtue in all the Sludges of the moment. Hitherto the spirits of the departed have been compelled to employ as their vehicles only men and women with characters subject to the common frailties of human nature, and the messages which they were so anxious to convey have frequently become distorted almost to the verge of nonsense by the ignorance or weakness of the mediums whom they struggled in vain to inspire. Tell a simple tale to half a dozen untrained, uneducated people, and see with what strange diversities it will be retold! For spirits the case must probably be still harder, since they have more obstacles to overcome, and the language or substance of their communications may well be more difficult to comprehend.

With what joy, then, must the denizens of another world greet the prospect of dispensing for the future with the services of such people as were David Home, or the Davenport Brothers, or Henry Slade, or Dale Owen (not the Vale Owen of our Sunday paper, but Dale Owen of "The Debatable Land"), or Stainton Moses, or the indefatigable Mrs. Piper, or Mrs. Guppy, who uttered oracles of "such delectable gup"! We suppose we must make exception in the case of Mr. Stead's "Julia," and Sir William Crookes's "Katie King," who, if we understand the matter rightly, were themselves actual spirits, and so were enabled to communicate directly, and even to embrace their admirers, and be photographed at their sides. But we must by no means omit Eusapia Palladino, or Mr. Vout Peters, and Mrs. Osborne Leonard, through whose brains, we believe, the spirit of Raymond Lodge attempted to convey a description of the life above, with such inadequate and even deplorable results. For surely no self-respecting spirit would care to have his account of the spiritual world perverted into such vulgarized conceptions as are revealed in the following sentences:—

"Apparently," the spirit of Raymond is reported as saying, "as far as I can gather, the rotting wool appears to be used for making things like tweeds on our side. . . . My suit, I expect, was made from decayed worsted on your side. . . . My body's very similar to the one I had before. I pinch myself sometimes to see if it's real, and it is, but it doesn't seem to hurt as much as when I pinched the flesh body. The internal organs don't seem constituted on the same lines as before. A chap came over the other day who would have a cigar. 'That's finished them,' he thought. But there are laboratories over here and they manufacture all sorts of things in them. Not like you do out of solid matter, but out of essences and ethers and gases. It is not the same as on the earth plane, but they were able to manufacture what looked like a cigar. He didn't try one himself. But the other chap jumped at it. But when he began to smoke it, he didn't think so much of it; he had four altogether; and now he doesn't look at one."

Similar unsuccess attended the manufacture of "whisky sodas" out of essences, and ethers, and gases; for we read that "when they have had one or two, they don't seem to want it so much." In meditating upon such accounts of the spiritual world, we feel that the spirit of poor Raymond must have regretted very deeply the terrestrial nature of the mediums through whom alone he was able to communicate with so distinguished a man of science as his father. All this information about suits of rotting wool, and "the new tooth he had grown in place of another one he had," and the ethereal cigars and whisky sodas that so soon satisfied the desires of smokers and drinkers! Surely that gallant soul would have given a somewhat different account of his angelic habitation if only he had been able to speak through a super-sensitive instrument instead of using the muddy brains of mediums! And, with Mr. Edison's aid, with

how much greater pleasure, to say nothing of "tremendous sensation," would the vast audiences to which Sir Oliver Lodge recently lectured in America have listened, if they could have heard his son's actual voice sounding from the spiritual world!

To be sure, there is always one great advantage which mediums have, and in this the most super-sensitive instrument could hardly rival them. They can safely assume that the majority in any audience is incapable of reason, knows nothing of the Laws of Evidence, and wishes to be deceived. It is as Mr. Sludge said:—

"Sludge begins

At your entreaty with your dearest dead,
The little voice set lisping once again,
The tiny hand made feel for yours once more,
The poor lost image brought back, plain as dreams,
Which image, if a word had chanced recall,
The customary cloud would cross your eyes,
Your heart return the old tick, pay its pang!
A right mood for investigation this!"

Or again:—

"Who was the fool

When, to an awestruck, wide-eyed, open-mouthed
Circle of sages, Sludge would introduce
Milton composing baby-rhymes, and Locke
Reasoning in gibberish, Homer writing Greek
In noughts and crosses, Asaph setting psalms
To crotchet and quaver?"

Under Mr. Edison's new dispensation, how tremendous will be, not only the sensation, but the improvement! Then we may hope to hear Milton's own voice building the lofty rhyme, not of "Paradise Lost" or of "Paradise Regained," but of "Paradise Itself"; then Locke may reason with us of Einstein as comprehensively as an angel might; then Homer will pour out new epics from his seven mouths; and Asaph will rival David in his song! We entreat Mr. Edison to make haste in the completion of his instrument, whilst we ourselves may still call up the spirits and do not merely answer calls from the other side. We foresee an immense extension of our telephonic apparatus. Will the Government take it over, or will it remain in the Edison Company's hands? And, in either case, what will be the charge for calling up a spirit? Will it vary according to date, so that it may be possible only for plutocrats to call up Eve, and settle the vexed question of the Fall? On the very first day when the instrument is in working order, we imagine ourselves ringing up and crying to the operator, "Spirituals, please; number three double nine, B.C. Hullo! Hullo there! Is that Socrates speaking? Hold on a minute! We have got a few questions to ask about the nature of truth."

Many other unsettled questions we should like to investigate—the character of Tiberius and of Henry VIII., the intentions of Cæsar, the affections of Cleopatra, the identity of the Man in the Iron Mask. Mr. Edison's super-sensitive instrument seems likely to threaten historians equally with mediums, for why bother to read about Pitt and Fox when you can converse freely with their ghosts? Bismarck will have much of interest to say, the mystery of the Sonnets will be unravelled, and Shakespeare be proved no Bacon. But let us not pursue speculation so far that knowledge itself becomes bewildering. In his scientific examination of this very subject—in his excellent book called "The Question"—Mr. Edward Clodd quotes a sentence from Giordano Bruno, in which we read:—

"Ignorance is the finest science in the world, because it is acquired without labor and pains, and keeps the mind free from melancholy."

For the present, until the super-sensitive instrument "materializes" (to use a hideous but appropriate word), let us content ourselves with this easy and cheerful ignorance. And as to the spirits of the departed, let us

agree not to break their incommunicable sleep by inducing them to vomit the gabble of mediums, nor even to answer the calls of the ghostly telephone when it is perfected. Mr. Edward Clodd is not distinguished for adherence to the Biblical faiths, but at the end of his book he rightly asks whether it is not better to be content with the words of Saint Paul: "As it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him." And, again, he takes from the obscurity of the Book of Revelation (not so obscure perhaps if we take it as an image of the world in which we live) the fairly clear and beautiful passage beginning, "They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat." Such poetry may have the vagueness of distant music, but, at all events, it is finer than the twaddle of mediums, or than attempts to reach out to the spiritual world by material instruments. Let us leave it at that, as the barristers say.

The Drama.

THE EVERYMAN THEATRE.

WHEN any new enterprise has been as much advertized as has the new Everyman Theatre at Hampstead, one is apt—under a pretence of eagerness—to attend its opening performances in a spirit of almost exaggerated suspicion. In the case of Mr. MacDermott's theatre, for example, we had heard a great deal of the lighting effects which were to revolutionize stage settings, and of the scenery and the company of actors engaged. We had been given the preliminary list of plays and authors to be represented. London had been promised a real theatre at last. It was unfortunate, in connection with these announcements, that, as ever, the preparations took much longer to complete than was anticipated; and therefore no blame attached to the Everyman Theatre because its lighting and staging were still, for the opening fortnight, in a rudimentary state. Such details, however important, matter less than the spirit dominating the productions, and the intelligence controlling the choice of plays and actors. We ought to have been satisfied, therefore, if the early performances attained even a part of the excellence which may hereafter be expected as a general rule. The theatre opened with a play from the Spanish, already given by the Stage Society; it proceeded to revive Mr. Masfield's lugubrious "Nan"; and it completed its first cycle with a new rendering of "You Never Can Tell."

I did not see either Benavente's "Bonds of Interest" or Mr. Masfield's "Nan"; and so I can judge the new theatre solely by "You Never Can Tell," of which a spirited, but, upon the whole, not very distinguished performance was given. Here the scenery was simple to bareness, and the lighting had not yet reached a point of any noticeable subtlety. In fact, it was both garish and relentless. The acting all round was competent, and in two instances—Miss Agnes Thomas and Mr. Laurence Hanray—quite excellent. Both Miss Thomas, as Mrs. Clandon, and Mr. Hanray, as the Waiter, played the parts along lines already made familiar to us in earlier representations. For the rest, one was aware of making comparisons with earlier actors in the same parts, not always to the advantage of those who worked so willingly in the Everyman version. There was an absence of finish in these instances which made the production a jolly, ragged, rough-and-ready, rather obvious affair. The play was undimmed; but its brilliance was not enhanced by the acting. One saw, in several cases, capable men and women striving by means of forced vivacity to put lightness into characters to the exemplification of which

they were temperamentally unsuited. One was conscious that movement and heavy underlining do not in themselves create an atmosphere of easeful gaiety, but hinder its attainment. Where spontaneity is too manifestly calculated, it loses some of its sparkle, and ceases to comfort the eye. We needed more imagination and less effort from our entertainers.

But against those features of the performance must be set the fact that these are early days in the life of the Everyman Theatre, and the further fact that miscasting is, at times, inevitable in any theatre which, producing diverse plays cheek by jowl with one another, has to rely largely upon a stock company. With all the faults of its cast, and the temporary deficiencies of its stage effects, the performance of "You Never Can Tell" was amusing and creditable. With more experience of acting together, and with more individual and corporate imagination, the actors will do better; while these qualities will have a favorable effect also upon the development of the settings. I should say that the theatre has made a good start, a good enough start to be worthy of having its faults mentioned.

The stage is very small, or it gives that impression. The hall is comfortable, and the seats are arranged so that a good view seems to be obtainable from all parts. So far as the audience is concerned, therefore, all has been done competently and well. We can concentrate upon the performance. It was hampered by the fact that the space behind the visible scenery must have been very cramped. Actors springing from the wings, after what was supposed to have been a breathless run, could not quite achieve versimilitude. They came plunging into the glare of the merciless light, and their faces were distorted in its rays. Beauty and youth departed, flared into as ghastly a lined pallor as any I have seen on the films. In this respect neither the women nor the men had justice done them, because the effect of such strong light is to falsify, as the flashlight photograph falsifies. Lines are exaggerated; features are given grotesque shadows. Mr. Hannen, who played the dentist, was robbed of all vestige of his natural good looks. Strange, impossible bulges, and blacks, and deathlike colorings, occurred in his face, as in the faces of the other players. At such short range as the size of the theatre necessitates one is unable to avoid preoccupation with such things. The lighting, therefore, should be modified. At present it is a strain upon the eyes, and an injustice to the actors.

The same hectic strain was visible elsewhere. It was especially noticeable with the twins, who both played wirefully as for a larger stage and a larger theatre. Greater distance would have softened these restless motions; but when one is having to be vivacious in about two inches of space one tends to a cramped impetuosity which kills freedom of movement and the impression of freedom. One reason why Mrs. Clandon was notably good was that she had not to move much. She was restrained: she was in the picture; and in such a small theatre Miss Thomas showed her great experience. The same applies to Mr. Hanray. As far as I remember, all the other actors failed in this necessary moderation. Mr. Hannen moved far too much; he was never in repose. And yet, for the purpose of the Everyman Theatre, every actor should, first of all, grasp the fact of his proximity to the audience, and should then so relate himself to his fellow-actors that the play can be remembered as a whole. I can only say that my memory of "You Never Can Tell" is a restless one, very bright, very much as though everything had been exaggerated, as it would rightly have been in the Coliseum. I hope all members of the company will attend performances in which they are not appearing, in order that they may grasp this elementary principle of perspective and composition.

With experience thus gained, and its necessary complement, confidence, the company may well make the Everyman Theatre a place of pilgrimage. But at present it presents an appearance of rawness and restlessness which checks enthusiasm for a brave enterprise.

FRANK SWINNERTON.

Letters to the Editor.

MR. GANDHI—A PEN PICTURE.

SIR,—Most politicians pride themselves on the fact of their being of the earth, earthy. They admit that in the problems of administration they have to take into consideration the weaknesses and shortcomings of human nature; that their highest idealisms are at best of the nature of a compromise. Not so Mr. Gandhi. Not only he believes that a man does not live by bread alone, but he is honestly of opinion that all his wants would be satisfied by a sufficiently plentiful administering of spiritual nectar and ambrosia—not only of individuals, but even of mighty nations.

The problem of good and evil is of tremendous importance to him—not merely a problem of academic or theological interest to be discussed in debating societies and synods; but a living, moving faith which may decide the salvation or the eternal perdition of thousands and millions of souls. To many of us the line of demarcation between Good and Evil appears very faint, if at all traceable; Evil very often a potential Good, and Good only a lesser form of Evil. But to Mr. Gandhi these are powerful spirits ever waging war against each other—the veritable Ormuzd and Ahrimanes of old—the spirit of Light and Darkness, between whom there can be no compromise.

Hence Mr. Gandhi brings to the solution of political problems a temperament essentially religious and conservative.

An idealist, a dreamer of dreams, a seeker after abstract virtues, in the dust and heat of political battles his voice is very often a voice in the wilderness, and when heard it is heard only to be exploited by his more matter-of-fact colleagues for less unworldly ends.

As for his innate conservatism, there can be no doubt. The leader-writer of the "Morning Post," who sees Red in everything and everywhere, may find in Mr. Gandhi a potential Lenin; it only emphasizes the general belief in the incompetency and ignorance of the "Morning Post's" remarks about India. Unfortunately Mr. Gandhi is not a Nationalist who points to his followers—like a modern Moses—the land of promise lying in the distance. He is not enamored of Western institutions; he has no belief in Industrialism, which is bound to follow in the wake of Western civilization.

He is a revivalist; his appeal is to the past. "What do the traditions, philosophy, and culture of India lack," says he, "that we should wholesale import Western ideas, and thus endanger our immemorial social fabric which has provided so many saints and heroes. It is because India has turned away her gaze from the Vedas and the ancient philosophy that she has fallen upon evil days. Let her return to the past and all will be well." Here lies the irresistible appeal of Mr. Gandhi to the populace. For in matters of religion and social reform, the average Indian is what the average European was in the Middle Ages. Religion is yet everything to him; he has not yet learned what the European has learned through bitter experience, to divorce politics from religion.

Here, too, lies the distrust that most of the younger generation feel against Mr. Gandhi's proposals. For good or for evil, India has been committed to a system of Government which, rightly or wrongly, has been called Western; we have, too, plunged into the deepest recesses of industrialism. Mr. Gandhi would have us deliberately set the hands of the clock backwards. Away with lawyers, doctors, railways, machinery; they are an abomination before the sight of the Lord.

It is not that Mr. Gandhi is ignorant of the West. He too, has been drawn by the Western glamor and danced after the will-o'-the-wisp of Western culture. He is a barrister-at-law. He had a lucrative practice in South Africa, which he gave up to respond to the call of his conscience. He is a fluent and polished speaker of the English tongue; yet he believes his own mother tongue—however rugged to the foreigner—is the sweetest for him.

A believer in soul force, a sceptic in the empty trappings with which men surround themselves, he has tried to translate his principles into practice. It is a strange figure that he presents. Clad in the simplest hand-woven garments, living on the most frugal diet, he is a striking contrast to

the Westernized Nationalist leaders. But it is this very simplicity, this complete freedom from ostentation and vanity, that has endeared him to the hearts of the people—and won for him the appellation of "Mahatma."—Yours, &c., M. C. CHAGLA.

THE DISCOVERY OF IRELAND.

SIR,—Mr. Morley having, early in August, in defence of his charge against the Government, alleged that the coalfield of Arigna had been excluded when the railway to Sligo was planned, had apparently no facts to justify his statement based on any knowledge of his own, for he has waited until the end of September, and then falls back on the testimony of Mr. Figgis, which I suppose he thinks helps his case. All that Mr. Figgis says is that in the 1830's Sir Richard Griffith planned a special line to Arigna to develop the coal.

I do not know when the line from Boyle to Sligo was projected, but I should think late in the 1840's, so evidently what Sir R. Griffith is said to have recommended did not attract the support of local promoters or of capitalists. At any rate, it is no evidence in support of Mr. Morley's contention that the Government thwarted the economic development of Ireland by forcing the laying out of railways on strategic lines. Apparently the Government itself has within two years constructed a light railway to Arigna. By the latest Bradshaw, September this year, I find that one train a day runs to Arigna on week-days and two run from Arigna. Mr. Figgis complains of the want of trucks. Arigna is not the only place in Ireland or in Great Britain that experiences a shortage of trucks, as he would see by the last report of Messrs. Bolckow, Vaughan & Co. Mr. Figgis does not tell us how much coal he saw two months ago exposed on the hillside at Arigna, nor does he help Mr. Morley by stating what has been the production of coal yearly at any time during the last twenty years. But, in any case, the construction of a light railway to Arigna by the Government two years ago, and the failure by them to supply adequate engines and trucks is no evidence that the Government have laid out Irish railways on strategic and not on useful lines.

Mr. Figgis, who must be treated as Mr. Morley's auxiliary, speaks of the money expended on this line as Irish money. I suppose it was money voted by the Parliament of the United Kingdom, whether through the Congested Districts Board or some other Irish Board. Mr. Figgis puts into my mouth a supposed explanation of Government bad management. I certainly should not offer any explanation, at any rate, till Mr. Figgis's statements were verified, and I should then look to those responsible for their explanation. But Mr. Figgis shows his impartiality and fitness to support Mr. Morley by the deliberate imputation that the English Government have fraudulently wasted public money in order to seem to promote Irish industrial development while conspiring to force Ireland to buy English coal. I need not follow Mr. Figgis into his suggestion about the Leinster coalfield. My challenge was to Mr. Morley, and to you as Editor for printing an article, even if signed, for which I think you must bear some responsibility.

So, too, Mr. Figgis, in coming to the rescue of Mr. Morley, says that all expenditure in Ireland is supported by Irish taxation. The Irish education is supported by taxation levied throughout the United Kingdom, and is voted by a Parliament in which Ireland, with less than one-eleventh of the population, has about one-seventh of the representation. Mr. Figgis further says that the Irish unrepresentative system of education was devised "at the sole responsibility of the English Mother of Parliaments." When taxation is levied, some of which comes from Ireland, Mr. Figgis tells us this is Irish money. When the Parliament of the United Kingdom votes it Mr. Figgis tells us it is the English Parliament.—Yours, &c., SHEFFIELD.

Alderley Park. October 2nd, 1920.

MR. ASQUITH AND THE LIBERAL PRESS.

SIR,—In ignoring the Liberal Press and choosing the "Times" as the sole medium of publicity for his belated pronouncement on the ever-darkening situation in Ireland, Mr. Asquith adheres to the principles that have actuated him in his attitude to journalism ever since 1908, when he first became Prime Minister, *viz.*, to accord preferential treatment to his journalistic foes and to give the order of the boot to his journalistic friends.

A conspicuous illustration of this behavior occurred in the spring of 1914. On the Sunday after the Curragh incident, influential members of the staff of the "Daily News," the "Daily Chronicle," and the "Manchester Guardian," were busily engaged in Whitehall—which on that Sunday was humming with activity—trying to ascertain the facts about the outbreak and the attitude of the Government in relation thereto. Their inquiries yielded very meagre results. But on the Monday, however, the "Times" came out with a most informing statement on the whole situation from the lips of the Prime Minister himself, and this is believed to have been made on Mr. Asquith's personal initiative without previous request or inquiry from Printing House Square. The chagrin in the offices of the Liberal newspapers on that Monday may be imagined.

The "Times" was never friendly to Mr. Asquith, and after 1914 its attitude to him became one of persistent, unrelenting hostility. It did much to undermine his authority in the country, and its influence contributed powerfully to the overthrow of his Government in December, 1916. Nevertheless, Mr. Asquith's partiality for the "Times" remains unchanged, a remarkable proof of his forgiving nature. Its magnanimity is universally extolled, but it is unfortunate that he should practise this virtue at the expense of his friends.

Owing chiefly to disloyalty and weakness on the part of Liberal leaders, the path of a Liberal newspaper in these days is not a flowery one. That path is not made any easier by Mr. Asquith's latest exhibition of disdain for his journalistic supporters. Not so did Gladstone, or Rosebery, or Campbell-Bannerman treat the Liberal Press.—Yours, &c.,

A LIBERAL JOURNALIST.

LINCOLN'S HETERODOXY.

SIR,—In reply to critics who have disputed my letter on Lincoln's lack of religion, I may point out that their references to religious writers bear but little weight. It is well known that Christians, when writing on great men, often ignore the heterodox opinions they may have held, and give prominence to any words of religious significance. Even Bradlaugh has been designated an "essentially religious" man!

Judged from the testimony of his friends who loved him and were in his confidence, Lincoln did not believe in the inspiration of the Bible, or the divinity, or the scheme of salvation, and he utterly repudiated the dogma of eternal pain. It must be remembered that he lived at a period when Free Thought was just emerging from Deism into Atheism.

Colonel Robert Ingersoll, who was on friendly terms with Lincoln, delivered a lecture on the great President, in which he said that as far as his religious opinions were concerned, Lincoln substantially agreed with Franklin, Jefferson, Paine, and Voltaire. The accuracy of this statement being impugned, Ingersoll supported his contention by citing such intimate associates of Lincoln as Mr. Herndon, Justice David Davis, Col. W. H. Lamon, the Hon. Jesse W. Fell, the Hon. James Tuttle, Mr. W. G. Green, and Col. J. G. Nicolay. Their witness was unanimous as to the President's heterodoxy.

In his "Life of Lincoln," Col. Ward H. Lamon testified to his friend's heretical views. "The community in which he lived was a community of Freethinkers . . . and it was no secret, nor has it been a secret since, that Mr. Lincoln agreed with the majority of his associates in denying to the Bible the authority of divine revelation" (p. 137). "Mr. Lincoln was never a member of any Church" (p. 486). Further evidence is afforded on pages 487-500, which contain statements on Lincoln's opinions by those who knew him best. The Hon. J. T. Stuart declares that "he knew Mr. Lincoln when he first came here, and for years afterwards. He was an avowed and open infidel; sometimes bordered on Atheism." Mr. Herndon, his law partner, said, "As to Mr. Lincoln's views, he was an infidel." This was endorsed by Mrs. Lincoln, who asserted her husband was not a Christian, and "had no hope and no faith, in the usual acceptance of these terms."

The question of Lincoln's religion is fully discussed in a book entitled "Abraham Lincoln: Was he a Christian?" written by John E. Remsburg, and published in 1893.—Yours, &c.,

FRANCES PREWETT.

[This debate must now cease.—ED., NATION.]

AMERICA AND THE PRINTING OF BOOKS.

SIR,—My best thanks to the writer of the interesting and charming paper entitled "Treasures Laid Up" in last week's issue. There is, however, one aspect of the acquisition by America of literary and biographical treasures upon which he did not touch, and which has a wider interest than that which is purely literary. If we are not careful, America will, in time, become the transmitter of the tradition of book production which is ours by right, inherited from the Italy of the fifteenth century. She only needs to acquire more and more of the incunabula and extend the work now being done at Harvard, where there are lectures on the history of the book, to become the inheritor of all our efforts in printing, binding, illustration, and that scholarly choosing of books which constitutes publishing of the best kind.

At present, we are able to save ourselves if we will. One certainly grudges America books like the first English edition of "Le Morte d'Arthur" and many other of the incunabula, but, on the whole, our public and university libraries contain all the material necessary for courses of study which would prepare would-be publishers, editors, authors, and illustrators, to make a real profession of book production. These things are "treasures laid up," but they ought to be used. One goes to an Oxford library, such as that of New College, to find that it contains material for a complete course of this kind. Such a course should deal not only with externals but with the psychology and scholarship of the subject. The John Rylands Library at Manchester has a collection of Aldine editions sufficient in themselves to establish a tradition for the profession of publishing, but Manchester does not use the books for any such purpose. London or Oxford could undertake the work so far as material is concerned, but publishing still remains a trade. Now publishing is essentially *choosing*, and the scholarly publisher, like Major Putnam, is in the apostolic line of Callimachus, Cassiodorus, and Manutius. By the nature of his *choice* he justifies professional claims, and the principles of choice can best be studied from such material as the prefaces of Manutius which M. Armand Baschet calls "La véritable biographie d'Aldé."—Yours, &c.,

RICHARD WILSON.

113, Corringham Road, N.W. 4.

We are obliged to hold over till next week a reply from the Secretary of the Liberal Anti-Nationalization Society.

VIENNA RELIEF FUND.

	£	s.	d.
Amount already acknowledged in THE NATION	1,500	6	8
Eric I. Lassen, Esq.		3	9
A. C. R.		1	10
	£1,505	6	2

Poetry.

TOWNS.

HOODED woman, spirit sweet,
I build an altar at your feet,
And on its jasper table lay
The silver lamps of poetry.
My pauper gift the Stranger crowns—
Where I light lamps he kindles towns.

Woman, as you wander by
He hangs red ensigns in the sky.
Tuam of Saint Jarlath hoar,
Trim, Balbriggan, Oranmore,
Mallow, Galway, trumps of flame,
Sound your ancient, holy name.

Woman, be not cold, not sad.
Such love in Gaelic times you had
Of bard and hermit shall be yours
While this sea-founded isle endures.
Their eunuch gift the Stranger crowns—
Where they lit lamps he kindles towns.

JOSEPH CAMPBELL.

Ireland, October 1st, 1920.

The World of Books.

THE "NATION" OFFICE, THURSDAY NIGHT.

THE following is our weekly selection of books which we commend to the notice of our readers:—

"A Study in Realism." By John Laird. (Cambridge University Press. 14s.)

"Correspondence of Charlotte Grenville, Lady Williams Wynn, and her Three Sons." Edited by Rachel Leighton. (Murray. 21s.)

"Rising above the Ruins in France." By Corinna Lindon Smith and Caroline R. Hill. Illustrated. (Putnam.)

PROBABLY most of us have felt that a history of the war, confined strictly to the legends, episodes, and documents of a village or a London suburb, ought to provide an illuminating narrative, even if ill-done. Remember "Past and Present," and imagine what Carlyle could have made of the war if he had but caught its reflections from the households of a London street. He could have reported an inspiring recruiting speech from a man over forty-five in such a way that it would have gone echoing down the ages as happy and improving laughter. His Night with the Gothas would have been worse than the raid itself. And think of that terrific old man gradually unfolding, in irony, with immense bursts of red rage, with compassion for all human follies, the rooms in any Town Hall of that time, where the ladies of both sexes met, and buzzed in committees, and sub-committees, and sub-sub-committees, overflowed into the corridors, and appointed each other to every kind of activity in sorting sugar cards, socks, chocolates, flag days, war savings, potato patches, and taking heroes for drives, all in the sure and certain hope of an O.B.E. in this life. Well, he will not do it for us, and we have to admit candidly that nobody alive will ever make of it, however they feel it, what would have been made by him with gusto and supreme ease.

It appears that the Croydon ratepayers, instead of merely thinking they would be delighted to have a war record of their borough, have actually instructed their mayor and councillors to do it for them, and to pay for it out of the rates. Municipal enterprise of that kind certainly should be recorded here. The libraries committee of the borough have prepared the book. It is not often that ratepayers openly express a wish to have their money spent for them, especially on literature, and for that reason alone we should value Croydon's municipal narrative as a great curiosity. As the rates everywhere are to-day—it is probable they are high even in Croydon—it is remarkable that a community should desire to spend money on printing and publishing a book. This local record, of course, contains a roll of honor; the names of its citizens who died in the war. It happens that I knew one of them, a volunteer who enlisted locally and died on the Hindenburg line. His name, naturally, was the first thing I looked for in the book. It is not there. There was another Croydon man, a scholar, who became an officer in the army, and survived the war only to die at once as a result of coming home from the battlefields in a horse wagon in winter. His name is not in the record. As, in a sense, he was killed by his own army, for that reason Croydon may not have included him in its roll of honor.

"THE man who serves his country now," quotes "Croydon and the Great War" from an historic speech made on October 2nd, 1915, in the Town Hall, "will have the right to speak with pride to his son hereafter." It was a "veteran" who made this speech, and as this engaging history points out, his "uniform of the Volunteer Training Corps took years from his age in appearance," though hardly enough, perhaps, to get him to lead the procession to the recruiting office. That was five years ago; and now any local man who agreed at the time with the enthusiastic veteran, and who went at once to serve his country, has had (if he survives to-day) experience enough of war and peace to tell him with just what degree of pride he may speak to his son about it, if he is quite sure of controlling his feelings when expressing them to the innocent. If he is

now out of work, and cannot buy a copy, he may be able to obtain a peep at the war, as it appeared to those who stayed in Croydon while he was in France, by applying for the book at his Town Hall. As he reads it he is almost sure to be disappointed. "There are, I fear (says the editor of Croydon's war history) omissions from the work. For example, we have found it impossible to give more than a passing reference to the work of all the churches for the country in its hour of need." The returned soldier, anxious to know what we were doing while he was away, will find nothing in this volume of our spiritual consolations. The suburb was in darkness at night, he will learn, however, "Frequent accidents of a minor kind occurred in the darkness; people collided with trees, posts, and other street obstacles. One such accident occurred in North End, when a respected Alderman collided with a young lady, and to prevent her falling backwards threw his arms around her. At that very moment a motor 'bus passed, and its lights were strong enough to reveal the delicate situation. Whereupon the young lady remarked, somewhat tartly, we believe, 'You are old enough to know better.'" But perhaps he will feel more sympathetic, because he will understand it better, when he reads the paragraph which says "the noise of the exploding bombs will not easily be forgotten. We can only describe it as resembling the crack of a thousand rifles and the clashing of a myriad titanic cymbals. It was indeed awful and terrific." Having heard a thousand actual rifles crack together while he trotted towards them, he will know what it was like at Croydon that night.

THIS history of the war consists of 437 pages. It appears that Croydon lost 2,500 men. It is only natural that a reader, who feels instinctively that these men must really have had something to do with the war, should be anxious to learn a little about them. With any patience he can muster he reads instead that "grave-faced knots of people discussed the situation at every corner, and in every shop, office, and restaurant. If we enter the swimming bath we shall see the swimmers stop to ask the new-comers if 'there is anything new.'" But the reader must not be in too great a hurry. "Next day we learn that the train services have been severely restricted, all cheap tickets being withdrawn; a particularly hard matter for those on holidays or about to take them." It is no good, however, being impatient. One must remember it was a long war, and that Croydon, like every other home centre, was full of people extremely anxious to carry it through to final victory. It is for that reason, no doubt, that we get so many portraits, usually full-page, of assistants to victory: mayors, mayoresses, the Town Hall, policemen firing maroons, the borough town clerk, accountant, treasurer, tramways manager, road surveyor, chief clerk, assistant town clerk, engineer, medical officer, Addiscombe College, District Commissioner Croydon Boy Scouts, Recruiting Officers, Founder of the Vacant Lands Cultivation Society, and the Hon. Editor and assistant editor of the book.

THERE is a long account of Peace Day, when there was "a cricket match between men over forty and under forty." We are also assured that, on that historic day, "a significant thing happened. The plague of darkness had been one of the greatest discomforts of Croydon by night during the long years of great discomforts; and here suddenly arose a moon over the centre of Croydon, not a cause of anxiety and a prelude to air-raids, but gradually revealing itself to the astonished eyes of the happy crowds as the once familiar face of the illuminated Town Hall Clock." All was well again. The period of discomforts had passed. There was the Town Hall clock by night. And so at last, on page 247, we come to the roll of the Glorious Dead; though it must be pointed out again that if the municipal clock is in the war record all the glorious dead are not.

WHEN discussing, with an ex-soldier recently, another topical manifestation which did not bear out the fact that the plague of darkness had altogether passed from us, the ex-soldier said to me: "How they must be laughing at us." "Who are laughing?" I asked in surprise. "The dead," he said.

H. M. T.

Reviews.

A CAUTIONARY TALE.

"Europe and the Faith." By H. BELLOC. (Constable. 17s. 6d.)

IN his introduction Mr. Belloc states his qualifications for writing a book about Europe. They are even more dramatic than one expected, for the chief of them is Intuition. In a deep and mystic sense, he is one with his subject-matter, and for this reason: because he is a member of the Roman Catholic Church. As a Catholic he has "conscience," "con-scientia," that intimate knowledge of Europe through identity that is denied to Protestants, Agnostics, Japanese, and Jews. "The Faith is Europe and Europe is the Faith." Only a Catholic can understand or write European history, for all others are outsiders, are detached, and are therefore predestined to error. Mr. Belloc has consented to read some documents, but intuition comes first, information afterwards. He reads rather to confirm the documents than to be confirmed by them, and he would have realized Europe quite as fully if he had read nothing or if there was nothing to read. Thus he holds a unique position, at least among English historians. He is unable to make a mistake. Whatever he says is true, because he has the Faith. Others may argue or persuade, he announces, and however much he stoops to the normal methods of scholarship we must never forget that he is mystically Europe at bottom. It is difficult to criticize a writer who believes himself to be Europe: so difficult that the brain does a side-slip and falls on to the most irrelevant matters. Such as: How will Mr. Belloc spend the money he gets for this book? (He cannot invest it because Capitalism is "one of the major consequences of the Reformation.") How did he spend the money he got for writing "The Bad Child's Book of Beasts"?

"The Lion, the Lion, he lives in the Waste,
He has a large head and a very small Waist."

All most irrelevant and frivolous, but one needs a breather before starting on the analysis.

"Europe and the Faith" is a most clever and stimulating essay written with Mr. Belloc's usual power, though not with his old charm. Its thesis is as follows. Rome: the source of European civilization. From Scotland to the Sahara, from Syria to Spain, Rome created a single State, the Roman Empire, whose citizens were often antagonistic to each other, but always antagonistic inside the State. To attack the Empire itself was inconceivable to them, because they knew it to be eternal. Outside the Empire were barbarians, few in number and contemptible in outfit. On to the Empire descended the Church. The Church, not Christianity: the word "Christianity" is unhistorical and must never be used, for the Church was not an opinion or a habit, but a "body corporate based on numerous exact doctrines." The Church might have descended on any clime and at any time, but did, as a matter of fact, select the Roman Empire, and was accepted as official under Constantine (A.D. 300). Then came the so-called "barbarian invasions," which were really neither invasions nor barbaric, but movements within the Empire of Romanized troops—e.g., Alaric (A.D. 400), though Goth by birth, was a Roman general by profession, who was annoyed with the central government because it had refused him promotion. There may have been a few raids by genuine barbarians from outside the pale, but they are negligible, except in one case: the case of Britain, which was severed from the Empire for about a hundred and fifty years, but permanently reunited to it by St. Augustine (A.D. 600). Except for the episode of Britain, the Roman Empire (i.e., Europe) remained intact until the catastrophe of the Reformation. The "kings" that arose in it were not kings in the ancient or in the modern sense, but descendants of Roman officers of the type of Alaric, subjects of the central power. And that central power, whatever its local seat, was dominated by the Church. The Church took up the reins as the secular authority dropped them, and guided Europe to the Middle Ages, "the highest civilization our race has ever known." Why did this civilization end? Mr. Belloc is inclined to see here a definite victory of the Devil. But he also notes

certain mundane causes, such as the Black Death, the sudden enlargement of physical knowledge, the growth of absolutism among the "kings," and the existence of "Prussia," or its equivalent. It is through Northern Germany that the Reformation comes—the Germany that had never been part of the Empire. And the Reformation would have been snubbed like other barbarian impertinences, it would have died, as it had been born, in the outer darkness, but for a terrible and incalculable catastrophe: the defection of Britain. Domestic difficulties and the covetousness of his nobles led Henry VIII. upon the path of crime, and the results are Protestantism, Capitalism, Industrialism, Atheism, Pessimism, Imperialism, and the War of 1914. Prussia is again the villain to-day—the insensate barbarian, who this time drags Austria after her and even puzzles the Pope. She has been foiled, but the danger remains so long as there is heresy. Europe must return to the Faith or she will perish. "The Faith is Europe and Europe is the Faith." With these words the cautionary tale concludes.

Against it the author sets the tale of the Protestant historians—Freeman, Green & Co.—who teach that the Roman Empire decayed, like other institutions, and was rejuvenated by invaders, many of whom were of Teutonic blood, that Chivalry, Romance, the Crusades, Parliaments were non-Roman, that the Reformation was a timely protest against Romish corruption. No words can express Mr. Belloc's rage and violence against such historians; indeed the possession of Absolute Truth seems to be as bad for the deportment as the possession of absolute power. Yet his rage is misplaced. Freeman & Co. had limitations; and their neglect of the Latin element in Europe is rightly corrected, but they do come up honestly for judgment, they do not take refuge in intuition and mysticism when their conclusions are questioned. Whatever their defects, they are historians, whereas Mr. Belloc with all his talents is a special pleader who is more occupied in tripping up his opponents than in speaking the truth. His tricks are numerous and at first impressive. He sets a quantity of little traps into which one duly falls—one or two of them shall be examined in a moment—but a thesis grows suspect when it is hedged by too many little traps, and one closes the brilliant book with the conviction it's a wrong 'un. For the Roman Empire is as dead as Dido: the reign of Justinian is the latest limit to which it can be reasonably extended. It influenced greatly its successors, just as a man may influence his descendants, but it is dead, if that word has any meaning. Its death was concealed by a fiction that Mr. Belloc ignores: the theory of the Empire, which appealed to legalists and dreamers, and which ambitious monarchs, from Charlemagne to the ex-Kaiser, have found useful in their interested appeals. Dante, in the "De Monarchia," tried to make that theory a noble reality. But where Dante failed Mr. Belloc, seven hundred years later in time, is not likely to succeed. The Empire is dead, and even the theory of it is forgotten. While as for the Catholic Church, that, indeed, is alive, and did become the Imperial religion under Constantine, and a temporal power under the Popes when the Empire perished. But the Reformation continued what the Renaissance had begun, scepticism and science built on the work of both, and only intuition can assert to-day that the Catholic Church is Europe, or that the war from which we are emerging was a Catholic victory.

A few words must be added on Mr. Belloc's methods. It is one of his claims that all readers—not merely Catholics—may and must endorse his conclusions, because the conclusions are not theological (which Catholics alone can endorse) but historical: he deals not with the doctrines of the Church, but with its career. This is an important claim, and he makes it importantly. He only excepts those readers who are biased against Catholicism, and one assents to the exception as a fair one. But in practice "bias" excludes all Protestants, Prussians, Jews, and Mohammedans, and all who have been at non-Catholic universities, particularly at Oxford, in a word, all who have heard of the Faith and refused to accept it! Here is a device, a disingenuous trick, introduced to overawe the inexperienced. Observe it at work in the controversial question of Christian origins. (We have italicized the crucial words.)

"We know that we have . . . documents proceeding from men who were contemporaries with the origin of the Christian religion. Even modern scholarship with all its

love of phantasy is now clear upon so obvious a point . . . If I read in the four Gospels (not only the first three) of such and such a miracle . . . I am reading the account of a man who lived at the time. . . ."

Does modern scholarship desert its phantasies to support this? One would like to see a list of the scholars. The Abbé Loisy would scarcely be among them! But Mr. Belloc can exclude Loisy as "biased," and Salomon Reinach on the same grounds. Instead of the words "Even modern scholarship with all its love of fantasy," he ought to have written "Catholic scholarship." For it is all that he means.

Another device. Too learned and too wise to make mistakes, he has nevertheless built up his case by an artful system of selection and rejection. When it is convenient to know nothing—as in the case of the tribes outside the Roman pale—he implies that nothing can be known. When he wants to know something—as in the case of Britain after the withdrawal of the Legions—he strains every resource of the historian's art. At one moment he is out for facts, but when he comes to the spurious "Donation" of Constantine he writes: "Nothing is more valuable to true history than legend," which presumably means that Constantine would have made the Donation if he had thought of it. Moreover, he is an adept at forestalling our criticisms, not by an argument but a sneer, so that he may frighten us out of making them. He has a row of pigeon-holes painted with such unattractive titles as "academic economists," "oriental pagans," "empty internationalists," "pedants mumbling about race," and into one or other of these we must go if we disagree with him. But we shall come out again all right on the other side, for the pigeon-holes have usually no bottoms: they are part of the author's bluff. And, finally, there is a general trap, into which all the others lead. Nothing would please him better than if, irritated by his devices, we were to exclaim: "Behold the fruits of Catholicism," for then he could reply: "Blasphemy. Exactly. Blasphemy and bias." Not this shall be our concluding charge. The devices are rather inherent in Mr. Belloc's own character. He would have been just as slippery as an Agnostic or a Protestant. His book is an example not of the strange effect of religion on the mind, but of the strange uses to which some men can put their religion.

ROMANTICISM.

"The Origins of French Romanticism." By M. B. FINCH and F. ALLISON PEERS. (Constable. 15s. net.)

MORE books have been written about the "romantic revival" than about any other event in modern literary history. Romanticism invites the critic, offers itself to him, a rich and easy prey. He can get everything he wants out of it—good anecdotes, picturesque details, a pretext to talk philosophically, and an unlimited amount of unconscious humor among the minor exponents of romanticist theory to make fun of. What wonder, then, if so many critics have chosen the theme? English romanticism has its devotees, but the French movement has more; for it was more definite, more highly colored, more self-conscious, and far more rich in absurdities than the English.

Here we have yet another essay on the subject, better informed, more exhaustive than most of its kind, full of details with which the ordinary unlearned reader will be unacquainted, but in spirit and conception nowise differing from the rest of its class. The authors have taken the regular pronouncements of the text-books of French literature as their framework, filling in the familiar outlines with a wealth of unfamiliar details. They duly deal with the return to Nature, the growth of sensibility, the awakening of interest in the past and the exotic, the revolt against classical rules, and all the other well-known phenomena of the movement. There is the recognized, the official literary way of dealing with the subject. Their book is familiar, because it is just the stock text-books magnified. In their introduction the authors point out, with a certain pride, that they have followed the most up-to-date text-books:—

"In summing up the characteristics of the century, which we are always prone to regard as the age of Voltaire rather than the age of Rousseau, we readily label it with such catch phrases as 'exaggerated sociability,' 'spiritual

atrophy,' 'narrow rationalism,' 'mere humanitarianism,' 'reform on a purely materialistic basis,' 'lack of imagination,' 'incapacity for feeling.' But if we accept these definitions of the eighteenth century, we shall find considerable difficulty in explaining the *sensibilité*, the love of Nature and of melancholy, the idealism, the vague reawakenings of religion, which appear everywhere in the period from 1760 to 1789, and are by no means entirely absent before it . . . In general we may say that the source of the movement is to be sought in what is at once the most obvious and the most apparently unpromising ground—the eighteenth century in France."

But, surely, it was only the romantics themselves and their followers who ever denied the fact. We have all known for quite a long time past that the Age of Reason was chock full of all the characteristics of romanticism. The romantics refined on the crudities of their predecessors, developed and systematized what had been latent in the previous age, made fashionable and avowable certain tendencies of the human mind which had hitherto been regarded as somewhat discreditable.

In his curious essay, "L'Hérédité Romantique," M. Louis Estève classifies the spiritual symptoms of romanticism under the three heads, *mal du crépuscule*, *mal de la province*, and *mal de l'au-delà*. A little reflection, coupled with a little knowledge of literary history, serves to show that these *maux* have always existed in one form or another in every age. The late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries are remarkable because it was during this period that they became respectable and avowable emotions to be exploited in literature. *Ennui*, for example, came to rival love as a fitting inspiration for a poet's song. There is room for yet another book on romanticism, a book that shall not merely enumerate facts, however interesting, or pile up citations from second and third-rate authors; however unconsciously absurd, but a book that shall attempt to offer some explanation for the strange fact that these latent romantic distresses should almost suddenly have assumed vast literary importance.

The causes of romanticism must undoubtedly be sought in the external circumstances of the period in which it came to flower. The collapse of the old monarchy, the collapse of the Revolution, the downfall of Napoleon, the growing horror of industrialism—it is among these that the origins and later nutriment of romanticism are to be looked for. Just as the causes of romanticism were moral and political, so, too, its effects are much more than merely literary. Romanticism is not a simple literary movement like Parnasianism. It has reverberated in the spheres of morals and politics. Modern French critics, like M. Charles Maurras and many others, have amply recognized this fact. And it is interesting to find in the twenty-second instalment of Mr. Wells's "Outline of History" a proof of its recognition in England. "Romanticism," says Mr. Wells, "of which Sir Walter Scott, the great novelist, was the chief promoter, had infected the national (English) imagination with a craving for the florid and the picturesque"—a craving which Mr. Wells makes responsible for the birth of nineteenth century imperialism. The hankering after vague imperial glories, which shall somehow compensate for the drabness and the beastliness of daily industrial life, is precisely one of the symptoms to be expected from what M. Estève calls the *mal de l'au-delà*. A book that should explain and justify Mr. Wells's statement with due evidence would be a great deal more interesting than any purely literary history of the development of romanticism.

THE CRIMES OF TRADE.

"A Winter Circuit of our Arctic Coast." By HUDSON STUCK, D.D., F.R.G.S. (Werner Laurie. 30s. net.)

IT is possible that the Arctic regions have produced a more distinguished literature of travel outside Europe than any other quarter of the globe, from the earliest explorers of the North-West Passage and Thomas James's noble "Epitaph on Companions Left Behind in the Northern Seas" to Franklin and Stefánsson. In remote and difficult regions one views the human race at its best and its worst, and many of the lofty characters who have tramped or sailed the frozen seas and lands have left literary memorials which appeal to us in their dignity and simplicity more than do shoals

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of the art fry of London circles to-day. Mr. Stuck keeps us in lively memory of these great names. He started in November from Fort Yukon, on the Porcupine River, with sleds and dogs, accompanied by his half-breed friend, Walter Harper, drowned in 1918 when the "Princess Sophia" foundered in Lynn Canal, and proceeded westward to Kotzebue Sound; turned north-west to Point Hope and north-east to Point Barrow, of North-West Passage fame, and the most northerly spit of land in Alaska, and from thence travelled the north Alaskan coast to Herschel Island, where he turned almost direct south, and so home again after six months' going to Fort Yukon. His journey was mainly a visit of inspection to his Eskimo flocks, but we are little concerned with pastoral business, and the numerous place-names after the old travellers along the northern coast give his cultivated mind the chance of agreeable quotation and reminiscence of them. Mr. Stuck can well afford to do this without personal loss, for he is an excellent writer and a man of downright honesty and decision of character. His, indeed, is a somewhat truculent spirit with virile opinions of its own, but, in spite of several errors of judgment and a good deal of wrongheadedness, this is what salts the book and makes it far from commonplace. He expresses himself revolted, for instance, at the "new scientific heathenism" of "Fewer and Better Children," and has no doubt that science approves of the old Eskimo habit of exposing superfluous children. But we can forgive these and similar aberrations in our general liking for his original and sturdy temper, his sympathy, courage, and sterling integrity.

It is above all to this integrity that we owe his most valuable exposures of what the trading spirit has done to Alaska and its inhabitants, human and animal. Mr. Stuck's is not the first book which has made us feel that this spirit in its modern developments is perhaps the most noxious with which mankind has ever been cursed. What a different place the world would be without it, for it is responsible for nine-tenths of our modern ills. The worst of it is that no adequate legal machinery—the magistrates are unpaid and the police a name—exists in Alaska for controlling and punishing the traders responsible for the misery and devastation of the country. Mr. Stuck found the Eskimo community at Point Barrow riddled with syphilis and tuberculosis, introduced by the trading pirates, whose employers live so comfortably on their tainted wealth in London, Paris, and New York. After describing the ghastly scenes among the Indians and Eskimos recorded from his own and other travellers' experiences, Mr. Stuck asks very pertinently:—

"Shall these reckless and unprincipled wastrels work their will unhindered? Shall drunkenness and lust and fraud and trickery and violence be the only teaching received from the white man's 'civilization'?"

We fear so, for trade is sacrosanct. There is no villainy that hunting, trapping, whaling, and other commercial enterprises have left undone in Alaska, unchecked, from procuring to murder, with the inevitable result of the rapid deterioration and diminution of the native population. Not less serious is the constant menace of starvation. Before the blessings of trade arrived, the Eskimoes were completely adapted to the rigorous conditions of northern life, in food, dwellings, and social life (Mr. Stuck describes them as the only thorough-going communists in the world). They lived by necessity on the animal species of land and sea in more or less harmony with the balance of nature. They did not, that is to say, exterminate their prey, any more than the bald-headed eagle of those latitudes exterminated the ptarmigan, and within their limitations, they lived happy and fairly decent lives. All this has been changed by the white man's traffic in animal life. The caribou, in consequence, have utterly perished from Alaska, and but for Dr. Jackson's individual and successful experiment (in spite of Government apathy) of introducing farmed reindeer herds from Siberia, thousands of the people would have disappeared with the caribou. Salmon canneries have been established at the mouth of the Yukon and, having pretty well emptied the river, have again brought the problem of starvation to the district. It is well-known that whales have been nearly exterminated in the same way by predatory commerce, and the savage and wholesale massacres of seals and walrus along the coast in the

breeding season have brought them within the zone of extinction and the wretched vanishing Eskimo to a further deprivation of his essential needs. Europeans and Americans are beginning to know about the cruelties attending these slaughters (when it is too late, of course), and Mr. Stuck has done a service to humanity by calling attention to the still more fiendish ones which accompany the trapping of lynx, Arctic fox, and other fur-bearing mammals for European and American women. Mr. Stuck believes that man has "the right to inflict pain upon the animals," which opinion gives all the more weight to the sickening details he gives of the tortures inflicted in the traps, to his denunciation of the "luxury and pride" of the civilized women responsible for them, and to his advocacy of sumptuary laws. Quite apart from the fact that furs are not a necessity of clothing in temperate climes, and that perfectly adequate substitutes for them are on the market, we have Mr. Stuck's testimony, based on his residence in the fur country and on the enormous rise in the prices of furs during the last few years, that the fur-bearing animals are going the way of the caribou, as they are in Siberia and other countries where they live. And every man of any sensibility (few women have any in these matters), knowing the agonies endured by these poor animals at the hands of trade, will mingle relief with regret at their extinction in the near future. This, then, is the record of trade in the Arctic regions (a fraction of the general havoc and misery it has brought upon all life over the whole earth), and a blacker one it would be impossible to conceive.

"Cheerfulness," says Mr. Stuck, without irony, is the principal characteristic of the Eskimo, though his minor ills include the excessive formality of the missions—including in some of them an absolute prohibition to smoke—and perhaps the good sense and humanity of their Archdeacon account in part for it. His energy, devotion to his charges, many-sidedness (he is full of admirable suggestions for the building of dwellings in which use and beauty shall co-operate, insisting very properly upon "the fundamental dignity of fitness"), and qualifications as a writer combine to produce an honest, human, and readable book. A first-rate map is not the least of its qualities.

JOSEF HOLBROOKE.

"Josef Holbrooke and His Work." By GEORGE LOWE. (Kegan Paul. 4s. 6d. net.)

Most of us think of Mr. Josef Holbrooke, if we think of him at all, as a mild and not very magnificent Victorian who contrived somehow to get himself born about twenty years too late. He is still comparatively a young man—forty-two years of age, to be exact—yet the impression left by his music, when we hear it, is that of something which definitely belongs to a quite distant past. He grew up at a time when musical England had just awakened from her nineteenth-century slumbers and was ready to take an interest in whatever progressivist movements might be afoot on the other side of the Channel. She was eager to make up for lost time, and consequently all such movements took her much as an attack of measles will take a grown-up person—short and very sharp, as though to punish him for not having gone through this distracting experience at the proper time. In this particular case, of course, it was Romanticism. At a time when Impressionism was in full blast in France, when the younger English writers had almost passed through the Yellow Book stage of their complaint, the Romantic wave that had been devastating the Continent half-a-century earlier suddenly swept over English music, and then receded as suddenly as it had come, leaving a number of reputations very high, dry, and uncomfortable. Prominent among them were those of Mr. Granville Bantock, Mr. William Wallace, and, of a younger generation, Mr. Holbrooke, all of whom, steeped in the idiom of Liszt, Wagner, and Tchaikowsky, set themselves to reel off long and elaborate symphonic poems, in which gigantic orchestral forces are marshalled and set to illustrate, point by point, the progress of some familiar legend or romantic poem. It all seemed very daring at the time, no doubt, but the ink was scarcely dry on these

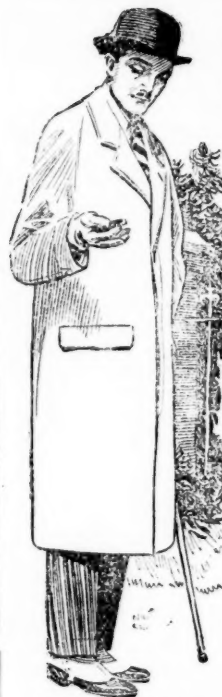


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mammoth pages when it occurred to us that we had really had quite enough of this kind of thing, that the Romantic vintage somehow lost its bouquet when put into English hogsheds, and that anyway music had got to cease trotting at the heels of literature; if she was to live at all she must discover her own material and hew it into shapes of her own devising. We ought to have thought of all this before, of course, but somehow we did not. We saw Mr. Holbrooke at work and watched him admiringly; we assured him he was a red revolutionary hero, and he was only too willing to believe us. It was our own fault.

Now, when we turn round and tell him he is not and never was anything of the kind, he will believe us no longer. When he perceives an audience listening in chilly boredom to "Ulalume" or "The Raven," he is persuaded that they do not understand it. When they remain unmoved by his rhetoric, he is not hurt or angry. He is sorry for them. His pinions are so strong, his flight so daring, how should they follow him? In another hundred years, or perhaps another thousand, everybody will have grown wings, and will fly up to him, their chosen leader. Only . . . a thousand years is a long time, and it would be much nicer, after all, if they had their wings ready now. He would take them such delightful outings.

Meantime, this misunderstood redeemer has got an apostle. Only a little one, perhaps, but still an apostle. Mr. Lowe's estimate of Mr. Holbrooke, as far as one can judge, coincides almost exactly with Mr. Holbrooke's estimate of himself. It is superfluous to follow him through his detailed analysis and discussion of all the published works; "genuine architectonic mind," "rich poetic imagination and wonderful tonal coloring," "full of a nameless charm," "exquisite beauty and deep feeling," "one of the greatest of British musical achievements," "few such remarkable, imaginative musical minds . . . throughout the breadth of Europe"—commendations of this ecstatic type fairly jostle one another in Mr. Lowe's pages. It would be unfair to say that he praises every work of Mr. Holbrooke without reserve, but his general attitude is clearly that of the Scotsman who said that there was no such thing as bad whisky, only some whisky was less good than other whisky. No decent sceptic likes to intrude upon the devotions of the pious, and we prefer to do no more here than record, with becoming gravity, that such and such are the considered opinions of Mr. Lowe. Some may feel a trifle uneasy when they read his opening sentence, which declares that "the annals of English history show little to the credit of native music before the latter half of the Victorian era was reached." For our own part, however, we think it would be ill-natured to assume from this pronouncement that Mr. Lowe is less than perfectly equipped for his critical task. Let us look upon it, rather, as a sublime earnest of the faith that is in him.

BOOKS IN BRIEF.

"A Manual of the Timbers of the World: Their Characteristics and Uses." By ALEXANDER L. HOWARD. (Macmillan. 30s.)

SINCE the war writers on arboriculture have tried to awaken us to the folly of our national indifference to the waste that has been made of our woodlands. Educational and administrative authorities alike have neglected the question of timber growing and supply, and in no other country in Europe is there such general apathy shown to the misuse of trees. If the books published during the past three years succeed in making us realize the importance of trees to the needs of the community, then Mr. Howard's learned work should be in demand. The author has studied the subject for forty years, and his clearly-arranged catalogue and descriptions of the world's commercial timbers are probably the most complete in existence. He has treated the subject from its commercial, technical, and industrial aspects, but even the general reader cannot fail to be interested, if he cares for trees at all. All the trees encountered in commerce are described, including those which have only recently appeared in the European market. There was a day when

our home timber supply was fostered, but whole areas of forest are now denuded. We rely to a needless extent on foreign supplies. Valuable woods, like the acacia, we have at our doors, yet use so little. Besides a detailed catalogue of timbers, this volume contains notes on conversion and preservation, on artificial seasoning (by Mr. S. Fitzgerald), on specifications and conditions of contract, and the tables of tests made by Thomas Laslett on a great variety of woods. The book is generously illustrated and well indexed.

* * *

"Mountaineering Art." By HAROLD RAEURN. (Unwin. 16s. net.)

THIS is the most exhaustive *vade mecum* (if he ties it on the top of his head) for the climber we ever remember to have seen. Viewing the numerous illustrations, we realize that it must indeed require many hours of solid reading to extricate oneself from the position obtained. The problem is how to untie the book; obviously the knot should be held in the mouth. Even to the lay mind there is a fascination in the masterly grasp and presentment of a highly technical study, and not even the theory of relativity is more completely in the hands of the expert than mountaineering. Mr. Raeurn gives his reader directions to climb every kind of vertical height from Dolomite angles and Alpine peaks to oval arches in the Rockies. He tells you what kind of boots to wear, what kind of axe to use, all about crampons, and ropes, and the way to hold on with nothing to hold, &c. Judging from the illustration called "Traverse, side-hold adhesion," in which a gentleman is depicted as clinging like a butterfly half-way down a sheer precipice by the little finger of the right hand and the fourth nail of the left boot, it must have been the author himself. In the middle of one of the most sensational books we have ever read, Mr. Raeurn casually remarks that accidents occur chiefly on the grass slopes above the principal Alpine hotels.

* * *

"A Labrador Doctor: The Autobiography of Wilfred Thomason Grenfell." (Hodder & Stoughton. 15s. net.)

THIS is a record of Dr. Grenfell's thirty-two years of missionary and medical labor, chiefly for deep-sea fishermen, in Labrador and Northern Newfoundland, and is true to type. Work in such circumstances is by no means confined to religious matters, and we hear a good deal of the Doctor's cruises, of his beneficent social activities in befriending the poor against the avarice, corruption, and brutalities of the fur traders, of his experiences in the seal fishery, and so on. Dr. Grenfell was not altogether unmindful also of the animal atrocities in these far northern regions, but, after reading his shocking account of the seal massacres in the breeding season, we feel that he ought to have condemned them more strongly. Altogether a useful and instructive book.

* * *

"Nerves and the Man." By W. C. LOOSEMORE. (Murray. 6s.)

MR. LOOSEMORE's purpose is to bring healing and hope to people with "nerves." He knows what nervous breakdown is, and has had exceptional opportunities of meeting and dealing with it in others. Chiefly he treats of the psychological causes, and gives some valuable advice about self-suggestion, concentration, and mental control. We can believe in the book's usefulness to those who have given way to morbidity, who have allowed small annoyances and griefs to fill their minds, and the difficulties and disappointments which are the common fate to exclude hope and endeavor. Briefly, Mr. Loosemore advises us to "pull ourselves together," fill our minds with tranquil thoughts, and to avoid the works of Thomas Hardy (for the "nervy" person the "Diary of a Nobody," by George and Weedon Grossmith, "is worth all that Hardy and his school ever wrote"). It is William James's advice over again: to exorcise a deleterious thought by opening the mind to one more fair. If there is such a thing as a real trouble, one which is not merely a spectre in the tired mind, Mr. Loosemore does not appear to recognize it. And some patients are so easy to treat. To Mr. Loosemore, himself, for instance, in the darkest days of the war, "what a relief it was to read our 'Punch' and laugh!"

Wm.S.

PRUD

The Week in the City.

(BY OUR CITY EDITOR.)

THURSDAY.

In normal times October ushers in the period of strenuous days in the world of business. This year the difficulties and perplexities in the economic outlook are so many and various that progress everywhere hangs fire. The coal strike threat is, of course, partly responsible. The consequences of a strike would be so formidable and widespread that until a settlement is in sight caution is a necessary attitude everywhere. On the whole, the City maintains the confident hope of a settlement, which it has held throughout. Stock markets are tolerably cheerful, though not, of course, busy. But entirely apart from the danger of industrial strife, the financial outlook is peculiarly baffling. The problem of deflation still presents a formidable dilemma. Our bankers have long been fully alive to the necessity for restricting credit; yet, on the other hand, they have always before their eyes the danger that if restriction goes far enough to hamper enterprise and expansion, output will be checked (which is the last thing in the world that is wanted) and widespread trouble will result. Those who favor the policy of a higher Bank rate believe that their plan will reduce prices by forcing holders of stocks to unload, while those who hold opposite opinions shudder at the restrictions on production which high money rates entail. We are now entering on an extraordinarily difficult stage of post-war recovery, and opinion among City experts seems to be strengthening in the direction of holding that it would be dangerous in the extreme to add an 8 per cent. Bank rate to the already grave obstacles with which industry is faced. Yet one cannot overlook the fact that the size of the floating debt or the fixation of the fiduciary maximum of Treasury notes, may at any time drive us into that dire necessity. The tremendous dangers of a too speedy deflation are now so generally realized that one can assume that gradual deflation is the goal at which those who direct the nation's financial affairs will steadily aim. But to attain that goal is a delicate and difficult task. Even gradual deflation cannot but bring with it jolts and jars and unpleasantnesses, which are the precise converse of the results brought about by inflation. A decline from recent abnormal levels of industrial and trading profits must in any case be faced. And this means that the small investor must in his own interests adhere more rigidly and persistently than ever to the soundest and most watchful of investment programmes. The whole nation has undoubtedly got to face times which will compare unfavorably with the boom years which have just passed. The thought is not altogether pleasant, perhaps. But we shall pass through these times all the quicker if every section of the nation faces cheerfully the task of pulling its weight in the boat. The greatest help towards a rapid passage through leaner times would be given by a drastic cut in Government expenditure. By stern application to production, and the saving and investment of all income not needed for maintaining health and efficiency, every citizen can potently help to steer quickly through to the better times of widely distributed prosperity which should lie ahead.

THE SMALL INVESTOR'S PROBLEM.

If manufacturers and traders have to face the probability of lower profit levels for a time, it follows that holders of industrial shares must look forward to the probability of lower dividends. Those who are possessed of long purses and big margins of income over necessary expenditure can afford to risk a period of patient waiting and lower returns in hope of rewards later on. Such fortunate people, now more than ever before, must bear the bulk of the task of financing speculative or fluctuating industries. The small investor cannot afford to do so, and under present circumstances he will do well to err on the side of caution and make sound security his prime object. Suppose, for instance, that a man retiring from business to-day and drawing therefrom his life-savings finds himself with £8,000 or £10,000 in pocket. How

can he most wisely place it? Everyone who professes to give advice on financial questions is frequently assailed with anxious questions of this type. The answer cannot be given in a formula to suit all such cases. For requirements differ widely in different individual instances. Remembering always the exceptional demands on caution made by present circumstances, I should suggest the following as a sample plan. Suppose I have £10,000 as my all in all standing to my credit at the Bank and awaiting investment. I should take pencil and paper and devise some such scheme as this: Divide £5,000 among British Government and Colonial Government securities now standing at a discount and redeemable at different dates during the next twenty or thirty years. Next, make a small list of preference shares in industrial concerns of the very highest standing—concerns which have in the past proved their ability to weather many a storm successfully, and which have plenty of capital ranking after the preference capital. Spread over this very carefully selected list £3,500. From the gilt-edged stuff you will get from 5½ to 6 per cent., and from the preference 7½ or 8 per cent. ought to be obtainable. There remains £1,500 to be placed, and its employment must depend entirely on circumstances. Some may feel that having very carefully safeguarded the major part of their capital for transmission to their successors, they are justified in increasing their own income by buying an annuity from a big insurance company with the remaining £1,500. Others irritated with the "dullness" of these investments will perhaps insist on higher risk and a possibility of higher income with some part at least of their remaining capital. Such impulse is human nature, but human nature in this case (where it has not large cash resources behind it) should be carefully guided. When a general scheme has been worked out take it to an experienced stockbroker for discussion and suggestion of individual stocks and shares in the various categories. Many of the soundest and most attractive have been mentioned on this page in recent months.

THE HALF-YEAR'S REVENUE.

The statement of national revenue for the half-year ended September 30th, is satisfactory on the whole. Revenue for that period amounted to £619,299,498, which is over £160 millions better than the figure for the corresponding period of 1919. Of this increase as much as £115 millions comes under the head of miscellaneous, and accrues, largely from the sale of State property. If only the Government could manage to cut down its expenditure so as to leave all these sale proceeds free for application to reduce the floating debt, the financial future would look a good deal brighter than it does. A decline of £20 millions, as compared with a year ago, in the yield of the Excess Profits Duty, has quite illogically and unreasonably been made the text for jeremiads in the Press on the state of trade. It seems to be forgotten that Mr. Chamberlain budgeted for a £70 millions decline in the E.P.D. yield in the full fiscal year, and that therefore a fall of £20 millions in the half year is probably better than was expected. There are plenty of indications of trade boom decline, but this is hardly one of them. For, for another thing, E.P.D. payments now reaching the Exchequer are in respect of accounting periods some way back.

TWO GOOD PROSPECTUSES.

Lever Brothers' remarkable expansion continues and the company is in the market again, offering the public the opportunity to subscribe for 4,000,000 8 per cent. "A" Preference shares of £1 each at par. Another important prospectus appearing this week is that of Wiggins Teape & Co. (1919) Limited. The issue in this case is of £350,000 8 per cent. First Mortgage Debentures at 98 per cent., repayable on or before April 1st, 1946, by annual drawings at 102, commencing in 1922. This is a decidedly attractive industrial debenture. An important Government issue is pending, of which details will be known at the week-end.

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